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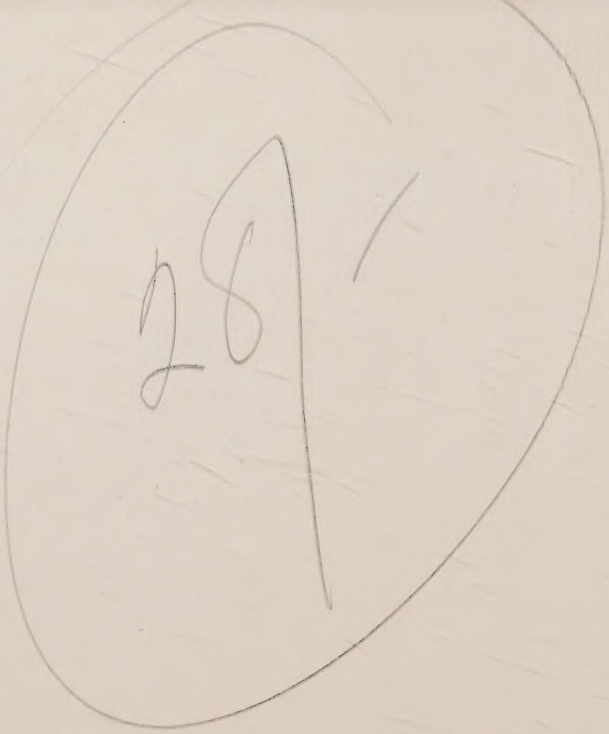

Uncle Jim, from Jim, and C.J. D.

Christmas 19.32

Muriel E. Templer.

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THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES

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THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES

A REVIEW OF MODERN ISMS

BY

CHARLES W. FERGUSON

1929

LONDON

WILLIAM HEINEMANN, LTD.

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FOR

VICTO

PREFACE

A preface can never be more than a final sigh in which remorse mingles with relief. Because of my supreme intent to pass in brief and striking review the whole pageant of religious oddity in America, it has been necessary to subordinate each part somewhat to the scheme of the whole, with the result that some of my chapters will seem all too brief. But it should be borne constantly in mind that this is a descriptive book on the religious scene and not a theological tract. The material has been so radiant and amusing that to present it attractively has at all times been my chief concern. Clearly I have been beguiled by the odd, but not, I hope, to the point of inaccuracy. For the benefit of those with an appetite for raw facts I have appended "A Brief Dictionary of Sects."

Especial thanks are due Jackson V. Griswold for invaluable aid in research and to William A. Weekes, now of the Associated Press, Detroit, for his diligence in finding material on the House of David.

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THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES

I

THE MODERN BABEL

I

It should be obvious to any man who is not one himself that the land is overrun with messiahs. I refer not to those political quacks who promise in one election to rid the land of evil, but rather to those inspired fakirs who promise to reduce the diaphragm or orient the soul through the machinery of occult religion. Each of these has seriously made himself the centre of a new theophany, has surrounded himself with a band of zealous apostles, has hired a hall for a shrine, and has set about busily to rescue Truth from the scaffold and put it on the throne.

The average man knows nothing of these new messiahs, unless perchance he reads that Swami Yogananda has been ridden out of Florida or hears of the plans of Aimee Semple McPherson for the Foursquare Gospel Mission, or unless his wife is a Theosophist, his emancipated daughter a member of the Liberal Catholic Church, his aunt a devotee of the School of Silent Unity, and his son a Buchmanite, or unless he receives gratis the literature of the Rosicrucian Fellowship. If, however, he will take the Saturday edition of any metropolitan daily and scan the page devoted to the announcement of religious services, the extent and intensity of these quixotic cults will be clear to him. In the New York *Sun* for November 20, 1927, announcements were made of over one hundred and forty religious services for the one borough of Manhattan. Of these, fully half had to do with cults and sects of cults bearing no relation to any form of orthodox Christianity. The same ratio obtains for the announcements carried in the March 17, 1928, issue of that paper,

in which appeared 182 cards, of which 90 had to do with the cults. Furthermore, the regular churches carry announcements of Sunday services only, whereas most of the cults have from three to five services weekly.

Here is Transcendent Science proclaiming itself as the World's Greatest Thought Discovery: "Teaches you how to solve any problem over night. Results practically guaranteed. Instantaneous demonstrations possible." Then there is Fidelia M. Lewis, answering, in one of the Ranashad lectures, the vital question of all religions, Why do we suffer? At the United Lodge of Theosophists the subject is Fate and Free Will: "Can a man control his own destiny? How can he develop the will? What is the will of the soul?" In the Waldorf-Astoria ball room, the congregation of the First Church of Divine Science is to hear "How to be Happy," and Mary Chapin, author of *The Way Out* is to speak at the Hotel Commodore on some new aspect of the New Thought; while the First Spiritualist Church announces its services at the Carnegie Hall and its subject as "The Intellectual Life of a Spirit."

At the Actors' Church, Dr. St. Louis Estes, President of the American Raw Food and Health Association, reveals his Startling New Discovery on Brain Breathing, "so that you may now LIVE 150 YEARS!" Luella F. Phelan, Ps.D., "Mender of Human Pottery," offers a "scientific analysis and constructive solution of existing conditions." The Church of Christ Teachings, Incorporated, will meet at the Hotel McAlpin and at the Steinway Hall, Dr. Charles Francis Taylor will lecture on "God, Etiquette, and Fun." At the Beecher Memorial School of Spiritual Science, an interesting discussion of "Synthetic Truth" is promised. And there is Super Akashi Yogi Wassan, who has the doubtful honour of having interested the unhappy Governor Johnston of Oklahoma in the oriental mysteries. As though all the rest of human anatomy had been used up, Yogi Wassan makes his oracle the solar plexus and offers in one lecture on Sunday evening to provide the key to that mystic region, and to solve in ten lectures all problems relating thereto

—which, by the way, comprise all the problems of life, economic as well as spiritual.

Nor is New York alone in its devotion to the mysteries. In his admirable book, *Modern Religious Cults and Movements,* Gaius Glenn Atkins lists activities in Detroit which make those in New York seem like the old time religion. There The Ultimate Thought Society holds forth; there too is the Culture of Isolan, the Spirit Temple of Light and Truth, The Philosophical Church of Natural Law, and the Church of Psychic Research. The subjects announced for a single Sunday include the following: "The Opulent Consciousness," "The Spiritualism of Shakespeare," "The Voiceless Code of the Cosmos," "The Godlikeness of Divine Metaphysics in Business,"—and all of these, of course, are over and beyond the standard sects and heterodoxies—such as Christian Science, Russellism, Mormonism, and Swedenborgianism—which the average American has come to regard as queer.

Any page of religious announcements will suffice to show the epidemic of curious belief, though we must of course except the winter months in the East, for it is then that the swamis and yogis leave their haunts in Gotham and go to Florida, or to the Middle West, where they give courses in astrology to devout governors or prey upon fat ladies in the dimly lighted shrines of opulent hotels. In the fall and spring, however, they are rampant in the cities, where their number and their claims are matters open to the observation of anyone who will take the pains.

It should be a matter of common observation that this clamour of voices represents the really vigorous wing of American religious life. Here is religion in action, and religion actively in the making. The student of religious phenomena is provided by this whole spectacle with the best possible chance to observe and record the many phases of religious behaviour. Hardly a day passes which does not bring news of some new religious faith. Not long ago a young girl in New England fell into a trance and told her parents—as Swedenborg, Ann Lee, Annie Besant, and others before her—that she could communicate

with the world of spirits. She lay in a state of coma for days; her father said she was an angel, the doctor said she was an epileptic. But before the second day had passed, according to accounts carried in the New York *World,* there was a constant queue of neighbours in pilgrimage to her door. She had become the intermediary between two worlds, her bed was transformed into a shrine, bereaved members of the community were her devotees, and her father was the keeper of the sacred mysteries. In brief, we have here all the machinery of a new cult; whether it will materialize into a world religion remains to be seen, but we must remember that equally commonplace and lowly circumstances gave rise to modern Spiritualism, which has enlisted the devotion of some of the more sapient members of the present generation.

II

America, of course, has always been the sanctuary of amazing cults. Indeed, it was settled by outlawed religions, most of which later became orthodoxies. As early as 1653 five families of Mennonites settled among the Quakers on Gravesend Bay, and hard upon their heels came other stepchildren of the Reformation. Some of these cults have yielded to the temptations of modern life, but the customs and habits of the Mennonites had not until recently changed one whit since the day they finally established themselves at what is now Germantown, Pennsylvania.

Ever since the day Mother Ann Lee and her woebegone troupe of Shakers stepped off a leaky tub onto the welcome soil of Manhattan, the immigration has been immense. The Shakers stemmed from a band of roving prophets in England and France, and they found a cordial welcome among the converts of a New York revival who felt that Methodism had already begun to get too worldly. Then during the Nineteenth Century came the Amish Mennonites—a solid, uncompromising body of folk who to this day refuse to take up such fast practices as wearing buttons and suspenders or riding in top bug-

gies. And in the closing years of the century came the most curious of all—the Dukhobor, sponsored in their pilgrimage by none less than Count Leo Tolstoy. They settled on the plains of Canada, where they fell into sharp disputes with a government which asked them to register births and marriages. As a result of their discontent and their messianic faith, a monstrous delegation of these people in the early years of this century sallied forth naked to meet Jesus in the Canadian Northwest.

And if religious cults have sought us as a sanctuary, we have ourselves made the most of our religious freedom. During the Nineteenth Century we gave three great religions to the world: Spiritualism, Mormonism and Christian Science. Not only so, but it was in that fruitful period that the Millerite revival swept the Middle West and prosperous farmers sold all their lands, invested in ascension robes, and led by an ignorant soldier of the War of 1812, went out to await the final resurrection of Jesus. New Thought, fathered by the gentle Phineas P. Quimby, lay in its swaddling clothes and had only to await the growth of active dissension in the Christian Science ranks before it rose, girded its loins, and stood forth as one of our most virile religious sons. Swedenborgianism, with its policy of intercommunion between the world of flesh and the world of spirit, came early to these shores and provided a fertile psychological field for the growth of the New Thought and of Spiritualism. One of the first advocates of the New Thought was to be found in the person of Warren Felt Evans, a Swedenborgian minister of New Hampshire.

Long before Mother Eddy ever visited Phineas P. Quimby and wrote ecstatic letters about his healing powers to the papers of Maine, we were treated to a rage of mesmerism. And in its wake came Spiritualism, started on its world-encircling march by gentle rappings in a lowly cottage at Hydesville, New York, where dwelt a humble farmer named Fox and his simple wife and two daughters. And while Mother Eddy retired from the public view and directed her gigantic organization from the seclusion of her New Hampshire home, the first

apostle of Baha'u'llah came to Chicago, where ladies received him warmly, and the new faith of Bahaism became established on these shores. And while Dwight L. Moody lashed the multitude with earnest pleas for repentance, another shoe-clerk—this one a resident of Pittsburgh—began to establish a faith which was destined to involve its founder in endless litigation and rouse the clergymen of America to a new and frightful menace—that of Russellism. The same year that Mrs. Eddy published the first edition of *Science and Health* in New England, that amazing woman, Helena P. Blavatsky, founded the first Theosophical society in New York. The same year that Mrs. Annie Besant discovered Jiddu Krishnamurti at Adyar, India, the Rosicrucian Fellowship was established in California; and Pastor Russell was hardly cold in his grave when the Liberal Catholic Church was established in England, and Bishop Irving Steiger Cooper appointed regionary Bishop of North America.

Today our religious history repeats itself with a vengeance. Beyond doubt the recrudescence of religion since the war has expressed itself chiefly in the gain of the isms, and in their multiplication. The numerical growth of the orthodox has been negligible. Over eleven thousand churches among Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists are reported by the Men's Church League to have gone without a single convert during 1927. Everywhere the ministers of the standard churches express pain and dismay over the hegira from the churches to the cults, though, unfortunately, the pain does not stop it. We witness today the flourishing of more than two score of bouncing, active isms, wealthy in finance, seductive in psychology, and incessantly active in propaganda. This estimate takes no account of literally hundreds of smaller cults which have sprung from the older ones and centred about this teacher or that idea. As soon as a cult becomes old enough, it gives birth to a brood of sects, or rather let us say that the population increases by a process of cellular division. Hardly an orthodox body exists in America today without a digit of sects which have

broken away in protest against worldliness or in pursuit of the illusion of progress. Only in recent months the Liberal Christian Scientists have organized, and New Thought has a subdivision for every flatulent term in the English language, passing variously under the names of Divine Science, Unity, Ultimate Thought, and the like. It is to the cults that we must look if we are to find the lauded revival of religion which so many hopeful saints have prophesied.

The truth is, of course, that the land is simply teeming with faith—that marked credulity that accompanies periods of great religious awakening and seems to be with us a permanent state of mind. By no stretch of the vocabulary could our age be called an age of doubt; it is rather an age of incredible faith, and I believe even a casual study of the Liberal Catholics, the Russellites, the Theosophists, the New Thoughters, or any of the rest, will bring this fact into relief. The student of either society or religion could do no better than to junk his texts for a year and read sedulously the literature of odd religions; he will gain at first hand an experimental knowledge of human behaviour that can never be acquired by the most painstaking research into the practices of primitive people. And in the cults—active, malignant, naïve, aggressive, and propagandistic enough to say frankly what they believe and practise—he will find more raw stuff than he could find in years of patient study in anthropology. It is the difference between abstract psychology and behaviourism.

Indeed it strikes me as passing curious that the modern religious scene in its richest colours has been ignored. Even those who write popular treatises on religion persist in going back to the days of animism and fetishes for their materials. They have much to say of Astarte and Gautama and Lâo-tsze, but they miss entirely such moderns as Jiddu Krishnamurti, Bishop Leadbeater, Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, and Pastor Charles Taze Russell. They have much to say of Isis and nothing to say of Madame Blavatsky. The result is that those who read the outlines know more of tribal magic than they do of Di-

vine Science, more of religious origins than they do of religion's present curiosities. Of strange practice and incredible belief among out-of-the-way cults, the average American knows less than nothing. Yet certainly the Bahais, the Swedenborgians, the Mormons, the Spiritualists, the Shakers, and the Buchmanites yield a lore as rich as anything Frazer treats of in *The Golden Bough*. The celestial hierarchy of Theosophy is as good as Greek mythology, and no review of "this believing world" is half complete without the story of Christian Science and of Ku Kluxism.

Nor indeed is any picture of the American scene complete until our isms have been sketched into it. The cults, as everyone knows, symbolize the way we amuse ourselves religiously. The orthodox churches are inadequate for our faith and our boundless passions. Yet the cults remain obscure in literature and art. Our business activities are familiar to all. Our auction bridge has itself evolved a literature as extensive as that of golf. That politics has become a sad and rather sickening jumble of idiocies we have been told plenty of times. Our amusements and our morals have been aired until they are almost purified. But business, pleasure and politics do not make the whole of America. It is astonishing that the whole flamboyant religious scene has been left out of the catalogue of our day, for in no particular are we more egregious and incredible than in our religious capers.

To be sure, Fundamentalism and the antics of our evangelists and reformers have not passed unnoticed. But Straton and Sunday and Clarence True Wilson are not our national religious heroes. In the back places they may be esteemed among the orthodox and the pathetic, but only because they have happened upon the scene and made religion fluent for a moment. It is in the babble of isms that religious life best expresses itself, for here the people have expressed their discontent with standard forms of religion and taken the reins in their own hands. In short, the isms represent democracy and its disintegrating influences at work in the orthodox religion of our day. Here we find the true temper of the people, for their

allegiance has been given voluntarily. We find the genuinely religious type of mind, not in the orthodox churches, but rather in the cults; the willingness to break with home and old alignments signalizes the true faith in the spiritual mirage. The cults stand for creative religion in the hands of the people. We shall not know America until we know the religions that America has made and embraced.

III

What accounts for all this luxuriance of oddity in religion? The answer, it seems to me, is simple. For one thing the cults offer to do something that the regular churches make no pretence of doing, and they offer to do what they do painlessly and quickly. They will solve any problem over night, and the results are practically guaranteed. They promise to provide, often in ten lectures, something that the average church long ago gave up hope of providing. They have addressed themselves to the actual, and not to the imaginary problems and desires of the American public. The New Thought, with its constant thought of prosperity, its opulent-consciousness, its belief in the limitless possibilities of the individual, is simply American psychology on dress parade. No religion is big enough to hold the aspirations of the New Thought. Its hopes exceed those of any orthodox belief; the result is that it breaks with tradition and stands upon its own adequate bottom.

Or there are the healing cults, numbering among them not only Christian Science and the therapeutic branches of the New Thought, but many of the innumerable swamis and vegetarians and other money-changers in the temple. The whole movement which they represent has simply been a restoration of the business of healing to the machinery of religion. Mesmer, with his mysterious tactics in curing disease, took the business of healing from the Church. Mother Eddy restored it, just as John Roach Straton has tried of late to do himself. We are a neurasthenic people who find need of constant sedatives, and

it is little wonder that we have turned to contemplation and mystic mental breathing for relief. In the rush of our own mechanical life we have forgotten the slow and easy methods and the highblown and polysyllabic wisdom of the East. The result here has been a rediscovery of the oriental method of living—a distinct anodyne for our misery, and we have welcomed the Eastern teachers who would teach us quietude and periodic heavenly rest.

We have become dissatisfied, too, with what might roughly be called our materialism—the thing for which foreigners are forever lecturing us. We have seen that mechanical inventions do not make a world and that less advanced people have much to offer. This is a perfectly natural and admirable conclusion, the product of self-analysis and broad-mindedness. It is particularly the conclusion of youth coming of age. Thus have we grown receptive to the lore and mysteries of the East as expressed in Hinduism and popularized by the fakirs who have come to teach us. Theosophy and kindred cults are but Americanized forms of the oriental mysteries, designed for occidental consumption.

But by far the most conspicuous trait of the modern cults is their friendship, nay, amiability with science, the archfiend of most evangelical bodies. We Americans are on a quest; we are trying to synthesize science and religion and brew nectar from the synthesis. The Modernistic movement is of course a timid step in the right direction, but it has failed lamentably to make the grade. There lingers in the mind of most Modernists the sly suspicion that, after all, scientific knowledge and religious belief are irreconcilable, and this honest uncertainty has prepared the field for some more positive assertion of the boon friendship of religion and science.

This assertion is abundantly provided by the cults. The whole of Christendom is exercised over the warfare between science and theology. On one hand are the Fundamentalists with their strident cat-calls and jeers, their contempt for scientific inquiry and their belief in the adequacy of religion to meet every need of man. On the other side stand the Modernists, asserting persuasively

but not too convincingly that there is no conflict between true science and true religion. And in between the two are the bulk of the cults, content and superior, for they have said, have they not? that there is no conflict, and they have proved it. I mean to say that Christian Science has gained much of its reputation by the sheer weight of its name. It merges in a single term two concepts which are generally held to be antithetical. The New Thought is on the best of terms with what it chooses to call science, and Theosophy is bedfellow to science "rightly understood." There may be as much temporizing on the part of all these cults as there is among the evangelicals, but the position taken serves a better purpose. As long as any body can convince its believers in this day that its faith embraces both religion and science, that faith has a following. And, what is more, it has a feeling of superiority. The Liberal Catholic Church, for example, welcomes science, claims to have no creed and no dogma, and to blend science and religion in one perfect picture of Divine Life.

All the while these cults are, of course, speaking of a different science from the harsh physical science that has made so great an impact upon Western civilization. But what of it? Science today is a term, and nothing more, when it is used in connexion with religion by religionists. And it is simply because the cults have solved to their own satisfaction the whole problem of religion and science by means of renaming science that they have won such friendship among the distraught of the earth.

Not all the cults, I grant, express our dissatisfaction with modern contrivances or our desire to escape the thought that science undermines religious faith. Some of these are reactionary. Just as the Mennonites and the Anabaptists sprang into being through the conviction that the Reformation had not been thorough enough, so some of the cults today are protests against the worldliness of organized religion. The Mennonites, still existent and still intractable, are a sample. The Russellites, with their solid convictions based upon the words of Holy Writ and charging the rest of Christendom with being in

league with the devil, are the most notable example among our contemporaries. I should say that Buchmanism logically falls in this class, for it is stridently evangelical in its tone and hell-bent upon the salvation of souls. It has, however, another feature to mark it for distinction; and that is its resounding emphasis upon sex. It has fed, I believe, upon the modern discovery of sex. It is in religion what *True Stories* and *True Marriage Confessions* are in the magazine field. It has points in common —its confessional, for example—with Shakerism, and there is nothing new about it, save its astonishing appeal to the college men of England and America. The Foursquare Gospel Mission of Aimee Semple McPherson is of course positively reactionary, as was the wave of Ku Kluxism that swept America following the war. It was not by accident, as I shall have occasion later to show, that the Klan and the Church were chums. The Klan was, whatever else may be said of it, essentially a religious organization.

Spiritualism stands, psychologically, alone, though its progress springs largely from reaction. The voice of the Church on immortality has grown either thin and rasping with threats of hell, or soft, persuasive, and unauthoritative with its tender promises and its doubtful assurances that we live in a reasonable universe. But here is Spiritualism proclaiming, and to all practical appearances, demonstrating, the indestructibility of personality. Is it any wonder that Spiritualism has spread like wildfire, leaping oceans and kindling faith in every land? It may be taken as a truism that a religion is virile in proportion to the hope it offers of either longevity or another chance in the world to come. Spiritualism deals with the one cosmic question that concerns craven man most vitally, and it answers that question with bells and ectoplasm and fireworks.

IV

I have purposely withheld for a separate word one ism that falls properly among the cults of reaction. I refer

to America's newest faith—Atheism. I am always surprised when I do not find the announcement of the services of the Ingersoll Open Forum among the religious notices carried each week in the New York dailies. I am serious and I have the documents when I say that there is no more evangelical cult in modern times than the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. Nothing so admirably demonstrates the fact that the greater part of man's social and individual behaviour is religious than the antics and literature of this group. On January 1, 1927, it sent its first foreign missionary abroad. It announces as its slogan "Kill the Beast!" It challenges a priest-ridden American to throw off its shackles, and appeals to the world at large to "join the army for the liberation of humanity." It has its Five Fundamentals and its Social Program. It looks to the establishment on this continent of what is to all intents and purposes a Kingdom of God, and the palingenesis that it proposes to accomplish is every whit as thorough as that of Mormonism or Russellism. It has its evangelists and its personal workers. It derives its motive power from the denial of a popular belief, and from the martyrdom that it encourages. Philosophically, it is religious, for it makes a huge religious ceremony of denying God. Practically, it is religious, for it is nothing but a lurid imitation of early Methodism in its tactics and its capers.

In the early part of 1903 the Bahais of Chicago, having secured the permission of Abdul Baha, as successor to Baha'u'llah, planted on the shores of Lake Michigan the haunches of what they intended to be a monument to the oneness of all religions. It was, I take it, to be an answer to the Tower of Babel. Unfortunately, or, shall we say, appropriately, the monument has never been completed. The work has lagged, and internal difficulties among the Bahais have necessitated the curtailment of the original plans. Obviously the time is not yet ripe for the temple of Mashriqu'l-Adhkar to be erected. The language of the people is still confused. How long it will be remains to be seen, but if I may prophesy, there will be greater confusion as the years proceed. And for the very patent rea-

son that religion has got out of the hands of the priests into the hands of the people. The result is bedlam, and the by-product of it all is distress to the orthodox. But the creative religious energy at work today, expressing itself even in the labours of Atheism, ought, I believe, to demonstrate to the devout that religion will never be left without a witness—of one sort or another.

II

SPIRITUALISM

I

THAT the religion of a modern English scientist should find its origin and excuse in the performance of two country girls at Hydesville, New York, in 1848 seems incredible. The birthplace of Spiritualism is inadequate, even if Christianity did arise from a manger, and the student is tempted to look in other directions for its origins. But to no avail. Spiritualism, as we know it today, began with the mysterious rappings of Kate and Margaret Fox. The allegiance of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sir Oliver Lodge, the interest of Sir Gilbert Murray and the hankering of Havelock Ellis of our own day, to say nothing of the interest Elizabeth Barrett Browning and others of an earlier day, all derive from what took place in the humble cottage at Hydesville—now converted, of course, into a shrine to which American Spiritualists make pilgrimages every year. The little Fox sisters made the raps that were heard round the world.

The fact is not without significance. "Happily for the momentous work which the spiritual telegraphers had undertaken to initiate in this humble dwelling," says M. E. Cadwallader, "the first manifestations did not appear to the high and learned of the earth, but to the plain common sense of an honest farmer's wife. . . ." And thus "the low muffled sounds of the spirit-raps that first broke the slumber of the peaceful inhabitants of that humble tenement at Hydesville became the clarion peal that sounded out to millions in the Western Hemisphere the

anthem of the soul's immortality, chorused by hosts of God's bright ministering angels." [1]

James G. Underhill has immortalized the "The Chosen Ones" in verse:

Not to men of worldly wisdom
Did the light from heaven come,
But to playful little children
In their humble Hydesville home;
Not by men of highest learning,
Men of deepest thought profound,
But by guileless little children
Was the light from heaven found.

'Neath the kindly supervision
Of the dwellers of the skies
Little children builded wiser
Than the "wisdom of the wise."
And the earth is brighter, richer,
Fairer is the world today,
And the angel world is nearer,
Since the children found the way.

While the "wise ones" scoffed, derided,
And declared it could not be,
Little children in their own way,
Solved the wondrous mystery;
Asking child-like, simple queries,
Half in play, unmixed with fear,
The unseen one answered questions,
Proving "it" could surely hear.

. . .

Started thus a world-vibration
With no power to intervene;
Spread the tidings through each nation
And the spirit world unseen—
Led by wisdom of the angels—
Wondrous story to relate—
Thus the playful little children
Opened wide the heavenly gate.

Love and honour to the children
Who let light upon the world;

[1] M. E. Cadwallader, *Hydesville in History* (Chicago, 1917), p. 8.

Be their names remembered ever
Where our banner is unfurled;
Let their frailties, which were human,
Be forgotten in our love,
And our gladness for the tidings [2]
They delivered from above.

The story of early American Spiritualism can hardly be more than an exposition of this devout eulogy. We should note, however, that the rappings at Hydesville and later at Rochester were by no means the first hints that ever came from the world of spirits. Swedenborg had free and easy intercourse with the dwellers in the skies as early as the latter part of the Eighteenth Century, and the Church of the New Jerusalem which he founded was not without importance in membership and influence when the craze of Spiritualism first became rampant. While it is true that the work of the Swedish seer had to do chiefly with angels, or non-human spirits, Hyslop in his *Contact with the Other World* asserts that "modern spiritualism really originated with the work of Swedenborg." Spiritualist belief is of course as old as humanity, and no ecclesiastical authority had ever dared to condemn it. The belief in ghosts, while not sedulously cultivated by the holy men, had thriven for ages. There simply had been no purposive cultivation of intercourse with the world of disembodied human beings through the instrumentality of "mediums" until the feats of the guileless little girls of Hydesville started the fad.

Still, there had even been wonder workers before the Fox sisters. In 1846 there was in France a peasant girl, Angèlique Cottin by name, who at the early age of thirteen had miraculous powers. These were ascribed, in the fashion of the day, to the possession of a potent electric fluid in her body. She was supposed, by those who knew nothing of electricity, to be charged with this liquid electricity, and her marvels even escaped detection for a long while in Paris. She could turn over tables and chairs simply by coming into a room, and her wonders

[2] Quoted in Cadwallader, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

were such that even the Paris Academy of Science could not determine how she did her miracles. She was known all over Europe as the "electric girl," but in the end it was discovered that she had simply developed a remarkable power in the muscles of her legs and could throw over a heavy table with them, under the eyes of observers, without being detected. In France, too, were the Somnambules—ladies thrown into a mesmeric trance that gave them power to perform such feats of cunning as utterly bamboozled the sage observers of the day.

In our own native land there was the case of a certain Dr. Larkin of Wrentham, Massachusetts and his little Mary Jane. They startled the populace of New England for several years with feats not unlike those later performed by mediums, but ultimately their method was detected and they landed in the hoosegow. Most notable of all is Andrew Jackson Davis, who has been called by modern writers "the John the Baptist of Spiritualism." He was a shoemaker who became in 1843 a mesmeric healer and clairvoyant. He was at that time a precocious, long-haired, uncanny youth of seventeen, "the kind of person," says Joseph McCabe, "who was easily believed to be rich in animal magnetism." In 1844 he declared that Swedenborg and Galen had appeared to him in a trance and laid upon his heart a great mission to mankind. Subsequently he poured out many effusions and two men who were transformed by his pyschic power took him to New York to inaugurate a new revelation. The three of them lived for a year on the pittances derived from his healing. His labours in the city left him some spare time and he employed it by going into trances and reeling off a completely new philosophy of the universe. This was taken down as he received it hot from heaven, and in 1847 it appeared under the title, *The Principles of Nature*. With the hurrah that was loosed by the Fox sisters, he was silenced, and he devoted the remaining years of his life to the pleasures of lecturing for the new cause—the new revelation to which fate had beaten him. The experiences of the Shakers I have given in the chapter devoted to that sect.

II

And now we must return, with proper humility, to the little cottage in Hydesville. Here lived the simple farmer and his wife and the two children, Kate and Margaret. At the time the message "that was to emancipate the world from the fear of death," flashed over the land, these girls were six and a half and eight years of age. The house occupied by the honest John Fox and his wife was regarded by the community as a haunted house. The story goes, though I am not sure how much of it has been pieced together since the tradition of the Fox girls became sacred matter, that the family which moved out before the Fox family came in had suffered from the mischief of the spirits. The father of this family, a Mr. Weekman, reported many eerie knockings on his chamber door. These were particularly weird because he could find no one who wanted to come in, though the importunate knockings were often kept up a greater part of the night. Their child, who awoke screaming one night, told her father that she had felt a hand pass over her face, and that the hand was cold. These simple folk, it is asserted, were disturbed by frightful occurrences up to the very time when the Fox family moved into the house in 1847.

Another family, too, had experienced similar intelligence of the spirit world. It is reported that a Mr. and Mrs. Bell, who preceded the Weekmans, had employed a girl named Lucretia Pulver. One day a pedlar called upon Mrs. Bell, and after some conversation with the man the good lady decided that Lucretia should be sent home and that her services were no longer needed. She went, somewhat mollified by Mrs. Bell's promise to have the pedlar bring her the next day a bright piece of cloth which the girl had selected from his wares. The pedlar never came. Not only so, Lucretia was invited back within a few days and shortly thereafter was left alone in the house at night. She heard that night the steps of a man slowly and somewhat petulantly traversing the house and occasionally making weird noises in the cellar and in the buttery. The next day she was sent to the cellar on

an errand and there she sank into a hole which had been only partly filled in with soft dirt. She asked Mrs. Bell about this hole and Mrs. Bell explained that it was probably the work of rats.

Then came the Weekmans and then came the Foxes. They began at once to have precisely the same experiences as their predecessors. During the first part of 1848 these noises, says Mr. Cadwallader, "began to assume the character of slight knockings heard at night in the bedroom." Sometimes they sounded as though they came from the cellar beneath. At first Mrs. Fox tried to persuade herself that these sounds must come from a shoemaker working late in a house near by. But this would not explain it, for the family soon noted that these knockings, even when not very loud, "often caused a tremulous motion of the beds and chairs—sometimes of the floors." After a time the noises seemed to become like footfalls in the various rooms.

In the month of February, 1848, the noises became so distinct and frequent that their rest was broken night after night. Father Fox would think he heard a rap on the front door; he would swing it open as suddenly as he could, but no one would be there. Then the pranks of the spirit—for such it turned out to be—became more than those of mere noise-making. "Once something heavy, as if a big dog, seemed to lie on the feet of the children; but it was gone before the mother could come to their aid." Another time Kate felt as if a cold hand had been laid on her face. Occasionally the bed clothes were pulled from their places in a most irritating manner and chairs were moved from their moorings in the dead of night. And during this harrowing period the noises increased in both frequency and variety. Often the two adults would light a candle and search fearfully into every nook and cranny of their cottage, but to no avail. There was nothing human about it.

This brings us to March 31, 1848, "a date which was destined to be indelibly imprinted on the minds of the coming generations as the daybreak of a new era in the spiritual development of humanity, a date which has

since been regularly observed as marking the advent of the greatest spiritual revelation of modern times, and recognized as the birth of the Spiritualist movement in all parts of the world." [3] That night the Foxes mistakenly supposed that they would not be molested. They were weary of the annoyance and almost dead for the lack of sleep. They retired early, but scarcely had the children been tucked in when they cried out, "Here they are again." The mother chided them, says Mr. Cadwallader (and it must be noted that I am giving, not a derisive account of the phenomena, but one drawn from the spiritualists' own sources), and the rappings grew more insistent than they had ever been before. The children kept up a continuous chatter. The father tested the windows and doors, hoping against hope that the noises might come from their rattling, but the noises answered, "as if in mockery."

At length the youngest child, Kate, "who in her guileless innocence had become familiar with the invincible knocker until she was more amused than alarmed at its presence, merrily exclaimed, 'Here, Mr. Splitfoot, do as I do.'" [4] The effect was instantaneous, and the first miracle of Spiritualism—and perhaps its greatest—was performed. The invisible rapper imitated the number of her movements. Then the child, after the spirit had rapped as many times as she had indicated with her fingers, exclaimed, "Only look, Mother! It can see as well as hear." These words revealed "the sublimest Spiritual Truth of modern times." They were "words which declare a truth that has already become the firm foundation for an ever-progressive Spiritual Church." The mother, astounded by the scene she had witnessed, herself grew bold and asked the ages of her children. The answers were distinctly and correctly rapped out. This was proof perfect. After further questions, she asked the spirit if the neighbours could be summoned. The reply was—by a number of taps agreed upon by the two parties—in the affirmative, and with the coming of the neighbours and

[3] Cadwallader, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

the continuation of the marvel, Spiritualism was born.

That, in fine, is how Spiritualism began. Before sketching its speedy growth to maturity—a feat as marvelous as any performed by any of its mediums—I should indicate that the Fox sisters later explained the method by which they produced the spirit phenomena in the lowly hut at Hydesville. Explained is a charitable word to use. Margaret, the older sister and the more capable of the two, repudiated her connexion with the movement entirely, told the world that it was humbuggery of the grossest sort, and, not content with this, gave a public performance in New York in 1888, during which she showed the audience that the mysterious rappings of the spirit were performed with her big toe and the big toe of her sister Kate.

The two girls, as a matter of fact, never believed in Spiritualism. Had they known what they were starting when they bamboozled their parents during those March nights in Hydesville, they would never have resorted to such methods of entertainment as that of tying apples to the bed and pulling them quickly back under the covers when Farmer Fox got up to investigate the weird sounds in his house. Nor would they have cultivated such dexterous toes. But once begun, the fraud was hard to stop. The neighbours became frantic. Religious furor was at its height. The whole affair was taken so naïvely and fervently as the hand of God that the children feared for their lives if they should divulge the lowly origin of the new revelation. They found themselves saints, with all the discomfort that comes from being saints. They were children once, but now they were the centre of a new dispensation, and they dared not act in any manner that would cast reflection upon the new gospel they had brought.

So it was that they went deeper and deeper into the mysteries. It was not unnatural that Mother Fox should want to know the identity of the "defleshed immortal" who talked with her so insistently. Neither was it unnatural that the children should devise the story of a

pedlar who had been murdered in the house before they came to it. Thus the whole story came out by a series of questions, and when it was all done, the pedlar himself was looked upon as a sacred missionary of the new enterprise. Ben F. Hayden, one of the modern writers of the movement, would wrest the name of the pedlar from "that obscurity into which it has been permitted to lapse and place it among those of the greatest benefactors of the human race; and like the name of Abou Ben Adhem of old, I would have it 'lead all the rest.' . . . In short, among Spiritualists, at least, I would have the name of Charles Rosna as familiar as that of Jesus among Christians." [5]

Obviously, the children had become enmeshed in divine circumstances, with even the murdered pedlar being regarded by the villagers as a patron saint of the new theophany, and it behooved them to make the most of the bluff they were running. Fortunately, they were capable of doing just that. And no one knew this better than their older sister, Leah, who comes now to play her sinister part in the amazing tragi-comedy of modern Spiritualism. Leah was twenty years older than Margaret, the older of the two children. She was, at the time of the phenomena, teaching music in Rochester. She lost no time, however, in getting to the country home of the family, and she had not been there a day before she knew just what the secret was. She was never as dexterous as the younger girls, yet the three of them together became the three witches of Spiritualism, and they are all equally adored among devotees of the cult.

I have flashed back for a moment into the circumstances of the first rappings in order to show the reason for forty years of silence on the part of the two younger sisters. They were kept from an earlier recantation by two things. One was the fear of the religious mob. And the other was their canny sister, Leah. Margaret had threatened the exposure many times. And when the words came in 1888, this is what she had to say of Leah:

[5] Quoted in Cadwallader, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

She made me do it. She is my damnable enemy. I hate her! My God, I could poison her. No, I wouldn't, but I'll lash her with my tongue. I loathe the thing I have done.

The documents of the exposure have been preserved under the rather amusing title of *The Death-Blow To Spiritualism,* written by Reuben Briggs Davenport. This book, published in 1888, bears the signed approval of the Fox sisters and offers every quotation and citation to disprove that the two girls had ever claimed to be spiritualistic mediums, if by that term is meant one having a peculiar access to the pandora box of the supernatural. Of course the death-blow produced very few results: Spiritualism went merrily on, and, as we have seen, the two Fox sisters are still retained in the capacity of founders and angelic lasses who brought the good news from Heaven to earth in 1848. But the story itself is interesting, and I shall set it down as economically as possible.

Leah at the outset took the younger girls to Rochester, where she immediately turned the new religion into gold, to the delight of the good American people. In the Hydesville cottage she had learned the secret, and she had practised hard with her toes meanwhile. She took Kate with her at first, then persuaded the mother to come on with Margaret, who was but nine years of age at the time of the first public demonstration at Rochester. The demonstrations enlisted the eyes of many distinguished men of the day—among them Horace Greeley, Bancroft the historian, Cooper the novelist, and Harriet Beecher Stowe. It was obvious that wider fields should be cultivated, and the march was made upon New York.

Their advent in Gotham was auspicious. Horace Greeley announced it in the *Tribune* most favourably and was the first to call upon them when they reached the city in 1850. He advised the older sister to charge an admission fee of five dollars—so the Spiritualist writers assert—in order that the rabble might be kept away. He published the rules by which the sittings should be conducted and gave plenty of publicity to the new enterprise.

Greeley's interest, however, was not entirely that of a publicist. He felt that the children were being made to

serve the ends of their older sister, and if not that, that they were much too charming to be involved in demonstrations which smacked so much of the sensational and abnormal. He became interested in Kate in 1855, when she was then a child of thirteen, and sent her off to school. She married and later gave up the profession of Spiritualism—joining with her sister in its denunciation in 1888. The most important thing he did, however, was to take the explorer, Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, to see Margaret. Kane became at once interested in the child and sought to induce her to give up the humbuggery—the term was used freely in his letters to her—and become his wife. He was, unfortunately for the match, the son of a wealthy family who resented his passion for one of the Fox sisters, and after many fervent letters to and from the arctic, they were forced to be content with a common law marriage.

Soon after this Kane sailed for England, promising soon to return and claim his bride. But he died before the two ever met again. A child was born to Margaret Fox Kane, and she found herself without means of support. She drifted back into Spiritualism, later began to drink heavily, and at last broke with Leah and entered the Roman Catholic Church. It was upon her return to America from abroad in 1888 that she made her startling recantation of the Spiritualist doctrine and gave such convincing proof of its fraudulence. Kane had sheltered her from the world for three or four years. After his death in 1857, she was ill for many months, and when she recovered she was penniless. For thirty years before her exposure, she lived in constant dread and fear of Leah.

These were the facts which she revealed in her interview with New York reporters. She told them that often after seances she would drown her remorse in wine. She felt that she was guilty of the worst humbuggery she could possibly perpetrate on the human race. Regarding the spirit manifestations which were supposed to have taken place shortly before in Carlyle's English home, she said: "I know that every so-called manifestation pro-

duced through me in London or anywhere else was a fraud." She continued:

> I repented in my maturity. I lived through years of silence, through intimidation, scorn, and bitter adversity, concealing as best I might the consciousness of my own guilt. . . . I am at last able to reveal the fatal truth, the exact truth of this hideous fraud which has withered so many hearts and has blighted so many hopeful lives.

She arranged for a public demonstration of the marvels that had taken on divine meaning in the hearts of millions of her contemporaries. At that time she said: "I am here tonight as one of the founders of Spiritualism to denounce it as an absolute falsehood from beginning to end, as the flimsiest of superstitions, the most wicked blasphemy known to the world." That was all she could say, for the number of her enemies in the audience and the disturbance which they caused, together with the state of nervous exhaustion she was in, prevented the elucidation she had planned to give. The *World* of October 22, 1888, carried this report:

> But if her tongue had lost its power her preternatural toe-joint had not. A plain, wooden stool or table, resting on four short legs and having the properties of a sounding board, was placed in front of her. Removing her shoes, she placed her right foot on this table. The entire house became breathlessly still, and was rewarded by a number of short, sharp raps—those mysterious sounds which have for more than forty years frightened and bewildered hundreds of thousands of people in this country and Europe. A committee consisting of three physicians taken from the audience then ascended to the stage, and having made an examination of her foot during the progress of the "rappings," unhesitatingly agreed that the sounds were made by the action of the first joint of her large toe.

An investigation conducted by the University of Buffalo years before had come near detecting this source of the rappings. It has worked on the theory, however, that the noises were produced by the knees of the fair performers, and its findings had therefore been discredited successfully by the Spiritualists. The probability that the sounds came from supernatural sources was reduced by the discovery that they did not come at all when the knees of the ladies were held securely. But Leah—Mrs.

Fish at that time; she had as many different names as Mrs. Eddy—pointed out that the friendly spirits withdrew "when they witnessed such harsh proceedings on the part of our persecutors . . . and it was not in our power to detain them."

With the demonstration of Margaret Fox Kane, the evidence was conclusive. That is why Reuben Briggs Davenport got out his book and called it *The Death-Blow to Spiritualism*. It was, of course, nothing of the sort. It caused only the slightest ripple on the Spiritualistic sea, and, since the theatrical exposé was not a financial success, the apostate Fox sister was soon forced back into the trade, though she never had much success after that. In time she faced the pleasant dilemma of recanting her recantation or starving in the land of the free. There is some evidence to show that she did make this recantation; at any rate she was restored to favour among the Spiritualists, for the very good reason that they could never admit the truth of her confession. She died toward the close of the century in obscurity and squalor.

III

And what of the new religion all the while? It had swept the continent like a plague. Its statistics have always been suspect and the National Spiritualist Association has the habit of referring to its constituency in addition to its membership. This constituency seems to comprise almost everyone who has ever lost a relative. In her recantation, Margaret Fox Kane expressed the hope that her words would disillusion at least some of "the eight million Spiritualists in this country." The estimates have been placed variously by inspired writers of the cult at four million in 1868, twenty million in 1875, and sixty million in 1884. The United States Census of 1900 reported 45,000.

Whatever the figure, the early growth of Spiritualism was incredible. The land was of course prepared for its advent. The churches of America were as yet imperfectly organized, and the swift passing of large bodies of be-

lievers from one cult to another was not uncommon. The Millerites were recruited from various evangelical enterprises, and when the ascension robes purchased by the order proved useless, a host of them went over to the Shakers. Everywhere there was a state of religious uproar and instability among the pioneering elements and the lonely villagers. Everywhere there was the greatest readiness to entertain religious novelty. The Methodists were at war with the Campbellites, and both were vying for converts by the approved methods of the day. The Mormons were stationed in Navvoo, and their ranks were swelling each day with proselytes from the various sects of Protestantism. The villages and the towns were poorly controlled by the culture of the cities, and the ideas of what was natural and what was supernatural were very primitive. Also, the rise of Swedenborgianism, the rise and decline of mesmerism, and the need of an equally exciting substitute, paved the way with gold for the coming of the New Revelation. Furthermore, the Universalists had played whaley with the idea of the old-time hell, and the people were in a pleasant state of mind to believe that the commonly held opinions of heaven and hell were travesties. The world was ready for a new heaven, if not for a new earth. The corps of workers and lecturers who sold Spiritualism to the land were recruited almost entirely from Universalist and Swedenborgian clergymen.

By 1850 the movement was thinly spread from Canada to New York, and westward as far as St. Louis. By 1851 there were six Spiritualistic organs in the country, each eager to print the most astounding news of the new phenomena that it could procure. There were lecturers of some skill and men of some prominence in the ranks. Judge Edmonds of the Superior Court of New York had become converted and had lent his eloquent tongue to the cause. Discontented Presbyterians—among them Dr. Jesse Babcock Ferguson, who travelled with the famous Davenport Brothers and gave their performance a Spiritualistic colour—were numbered with the leaders. Then there was the Reverend W. Fishbough, who had

been the amanuensis through which the revelation of a new philosophy had come to the world by way of Andrew Jackson Davis.

All in all the personnel in the very early years was experienced if not imposing. The movement really manifested itself, however, among the lowly and the lonely. The attraction of the big men was stagecraft and it is important only insofar as it shows how completely the whole population was swept into the maelstrom. For by the end of 1849 there was nothing short of chaos in American religious life. Mrs. Emma Hardinge tells us that infuriated Irish Catholics would often break into the meetings and chase the Spiritualists from room to room. She continues:

> Two or three of "the Prophets" would be jabbering in known tongues at once, while others would be shouting the war-whoop of the Red Indian. Apostolic letters, in miserable grammar and words spelling, were palmed off as geniune productions of the seventh sphere.[6]

It was commonly supposed among the people that the world had entered into a new dispensation and that there had begun on the American continent an unparalleled outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Everywhere the comparison to Pentecost was on the lips of the people, and the most amazing things began to happen. The shade of Benjamin Franklin appeared and explained that he was now at the head of a college of spirits which would aid humanity to restore its faith in the divine. A man by the name of John Murray Spear announced that the eager spirits of the dead had indeed and in truth organized themselves into colleges in order to assist in the regeneration of the earth. There were bands of "Governmentizers, Educationizers, Agriculturalizers, Healthfulizers, Electrizers," and, apparently, of Fertilizers, for there were a number of immaculate conceptions during the period. The Electrizers had commanded Spear to perfect a new electric turban which would revolutionize industry and enable humanity to live on four hours of work

[6] Mrs. Emma Hardinge, *Modern American Spiritualism,* (New York, 1870), p. 52.

a day. Some effort was made by a curious and later incensed citizenry to see the new marvel, and Spear, in great straits, explained that a wanton mob had stolen into his barn and destroyed the machine. He had also received messages to the effect that the Angelic Association of Electrizers had felt the time not yet ripe and humanity not yet appreciative enough for the revelation of the mystery.

There was nothing too extraordinary for at least a hundred thousand of our citizens to believe. Indeed, they would believe nothing unless it was extraordinary. We were in the midst of the last great religious uproar before the dawn of modern science. The Spiritualist paper that could get the most grotesque story got the biggest circulation. Salutations from the nether world were commonplace—and have continued to be. A Dr. Dexter of New York published a long communication from Swedenborg (who spelled his own name in the spirit message "Sweedenborg"). At Auburn, New York a Mrs. Tamlin, a mesmeric healer, ignorant of music, fell into a trance, took up a harp and "poured forth such strains that any attempt to describe their beauty must fail." The Auburn Apostolic Circle was visited by a select group of spirits—among them Moses, Paul, Daniel, and John. Two Universalist clergymen joined the earthly group, and, following the method of several other lamented groups before and since, about one hundred of the circle moved out from wicked Auburn to set up an ideal community at Mountain Cove. They broke up in unsavoury scandals and quarrels.

In 1853 Judge Edmonds discovered with much delight that he was himself a medium. His feats, and those of his daughter Laura, are now preserved for the incredulous in a group of his own letters sent to the papers of the day. The thirteen-year-old daughter of ex-governor Tallmadge of Wisconsin vied with the daughter of Judge Edmonds and both girls bamboozled their fathers into complete and lasting faith. The daughter of J. B. Ferguson cured all the ailments of her family and those of the negroes on the surrounding plantations by means of a

strange concoction which the spirits brewed in an empty cup held in her hand as she passed into a trance.

A musical craze swept the land. Men and women who had never touched instruments before sat down and played with "unmistakable individuality." One young girl was seized by the spirit of Mozart and the spirit of Beethoven. Mrs. Hardinge tells us that this child "did marvellous improvisations," and that many others occasionally did "new and entirely sublime compositions."

Up in Connecticut a Reverend Dr. Phelps found that his house had been thrown into complete disorder by the spirits. The windows were broken. The furniture was pulled about and missiles were thrown in from every direction. Turnips, with strange hieroglyphics carved on them, grew right out of the dining-room floor. Letters fell from the ceiling. An umbrella was mysteriously seized and thrown for twenty-five feet. One member of the family, going upstairs to an empty bedroom, found in it "eleven figures of angelic beauty." This same member of the family reported that "before each angelic figure was an open Bible and each angelic finger pointed to some passage in favour of Spiritualism." Andrew Jackson Davis was summoned from New York to decipher the hieroglyphics on the turnips.

Nor was this the half of it. Everywhere the most lowly and incompetent people became powerful media of the current which God had loosed upon the continent of North America. One respectable young lady went into a trance that lasted forty-five days, and she awoke a powerful medium. Beyond doubt a new economy had come to pass. Out in Dover Village, Ohio, Jonathan Koons devised a spirit machine which like the modern radio centred the manifestations of the spirit world in one gigantic receiving set. He was thoughtful enough to provide phosphorous for the spirits to dip their hands in, so that there could be no question about their manifestations. Because of his foresight and ingenuity, he was visited nightly by a special band of very ancient spirits. They had lived on the earth before Adam, a fact which caused the Spiritualists no alarm, for they had

junked the old theology in the midst of the new and unprecedented outpouring of the Holy Ghost. Each night these spirits sang choruses for the sitters, providing "a foretaste of heaven on earth."

The idea of erecting special houses or receiving stations with especially rich centres of manifestation grew after Koon's experience and farmers in the vicinity found that they could get similar phenomena by the conversion of an old outhouse into a shrine for the emissaries of the glory world. In many of these guns were fired and drums were beaten with great ado and gusto by the spirits that man had imagined to be so frail and impotent. And if strength was shown by the spirits in a physical way, it was manifested equally by them in the spiritual realm. A man by the name of Miller was overpowered by the spirits while lecturing against the new craze, and like Paul on the road to Damascus, he was converted on the spot.

As I have said, nothing was incredible unless it seemed ordinary. The Spiritualist papers scooped the modern tabloids by fifty years or more, and their circulation rose with the tide of hysteria. They were only too glad to report that an Ohio tailor named Rogers got the afflatus and began to paint the most exquisite and inimitably faithful pictures of dead people he had never seen. Flames, pillars of fire, and smoke in towering columns broke out in a Pennsylvania town and were seen by all. Throughout what is now widely called the Bible belt, men, women, and children mounted on benches and began to shout in strange tongues. In the black district the fire influence spread and negroes would thrust their hands into the flames or stand on live coals with their naked feet. And if these manifestations occurred among the lowly and the common, we may well imagine the audacity of the professional mediums, of whom there were more than thirty thousand in 1854.[7]

The posthumous literature of the period would fill a

[7] For a full account of the marvels of the period see Emma Hardinge, *Modern American Spiritualism* (New York, 1870); for a graphic résumé see Joseph McCabe, *Spiritualism, A Popular History from 1847* (London, 1920).

library. There is hardly a departed dignitary for the past two thousand years who has not been called back to earth for his message to humanity. Every medium became an amanuensis for some lamented celebrity and every one published the results in a tome of no importance. W. T. Stead, known both in Spiritualist and Theosophical circles, claimed to have seen the Spirit of an Egyptian who had departed this life over three thousand years ago. "For several minutes," he records, "the Spirit was distinctly visible to us munching an apple, but I felt so exhausted by the loss of magnetism and nervous as well that I asked him to leave us. I will never forget his soulful expression." The departed hosts were in every case simply struggling to get in touch with those on earth again and it is not in the least surprising that the feats of the day were performed by some of the most notable men of earth's history. The Spirits even went so far as to edit magazines. Houdini reports that *The Spirit Messenger* and *The Star of Truth* were published in 1852 by H. P. Ambler of Springfield, Massachusetts. They were "edited and composed by Spirits." Not even the publisher was allowed to put his mundane hand in the enterprise. It was simply his business to put before the people the elucidations of the Spirits on every conceivable topic of interest. *The Northwestern Orient,* published in 1852 by C. H. White, contained communications from John Adams, Edgar Allan Poe, John Wesley, George Whitefield, Thomas Paine, and others.[8]

It is not necessary, however, to prowl about in the Nineteenth Century for the works of departed geniuses who have made mediums the vehicles of their expressions. A book, *Oscar Wilde from Purgatory,* has just been published in New York, where its message was received through two mediums. Out in St. Louis there is a Scientific Seance Club, the records of whose meetings contain over two hundred speeches delivered by a hundred and fifty speakers from the Spirit World. It has of late published the discourses of Robert Green Ingersoll and the eminent Baptist, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. It

[8] Houdini, *A Magician Among the Spirits* (New York, 1924), p. 229.

reports that "the evening's program is always arranged on the spirit side" and the members of the Circle never know beforehand who the speaker is to be. Moreover, *Jesus' Teaching By Shakespeare's Spirit* was published as late as 1922. It is recorded on the title page that this monumental work was taken by the direct dictation of the spirit's voice. "No alterations in any Mss. dictated by this spirit." Shakespeare, it seems, turned theologian when he reached his home beyond the skies and has been devoting his energies since that day to the conversion of the race, for this is not the only title which appears under the heading of his posthumous works. A part of the dedication will suffice to show how spiritually minded he became:

> *I* dedicate this book to every soul with*in* the body case who *derides* the truth for which Jesus came *from* God to prove *for* his Father.

And if the skeptic feels that death may have dulled the genius of the bard, I can only cite lines from the opening sonnet:

> Sonnet. For my Lord
>
> Written by Shakespeare's soul
>
> LORD of *my soul,* my part *for* Thee, I bring
> To better here the part Thou say'st *of* Thee
> Who *gave* me Thy eternal, breathless Time
> *To* praise *and* worship *as* Thou gavest me.

Every extravagance and absurdity which has been practised by Spiritualism in recent years, however, found its origin and its better among the practitioners of that early day. As McCabe points out (*Spiritualism: A Popular History from 1847*), Spiritualism reached the zenith of its interest five years after it originated. It slumped then until the seventies, made some new progress toward the close of the century, but was practically dead at the outbreak of the World War. He estimates that both its influence and its numbers were doubled and possibly trebled by the war. But the good old days of credulity and universal hilarity in faith have never returned. The approach today is colder and more scientific, and the public at large more irreverently suspicious. The conse-

quence is that the methods and devices of the mediums and those who seek to demonstrate it to the world are more sophisticated and better conceived. No medium today would think of using her toes for the production of phenomena, though the famous Margery, whom Houdini detected in Boston a year before his death, resorted to devices dangerously close to those by which the Fox sisters first made the hoax a faith.

Exposure and ill repute began early to plague the new dispensation. The decadence of religions contemporaneous with its rise threw more than one fakir out of work and made him pine for a means of livelihood. The mesmerists flocked to the new standard which had been so auspiciously raised, and such pariahs as John Murray Spear and other Socialists and free lovers joined the movement and outraged the whole faith in the minds of staunch and true Americans. Spear started a free love colony at Kiatone Springs, New York, and was soon involved in scandalous practices which the country as a whole has never learned to associate with the practice of religion. Among others were the followers of Robert Dale Owen, and though the country could accept the fact of hieroglyphics on turnips with equanimity and comparative calm, it could not tolerate the thought that false economics might be associated with the return of the Lord to his own. A Dr. and Mrs. Spencer founded the Harmonial Society in Kansas in the Fifties. There were fifty in the group and they began with five thousand dollars in capital. Land and love were free and cheap for a while, but mutiny against the Spencers soon developed into a mad uprising, and the leaders were forced to take to their heels across the Kansas prairies. Mrs. Spencer, it appears, had alleged that she received the finery in which she bedecked herself from the spirit world—but this seemed improbable, even to the faithful. In 1854 came the Order of Patriarchs. The founder received through the mail a supply of ancient tablets which contained the constitution and by-laws of a free love community, which he was instructed to establish. These outrages to American propriety began to leave the hint

in a great many solid minds that Spiritualism might not after all be of the Lord. The psychology of the crowd turned against it and hostility arose on every hand. It was nothing but the dexterity of such men as D. D. Home that carried the movement through the slump that followed the earliest detections of fraud.

Then in 1888 came the recantation of the Fox sisters. Kate Fox had married a London barrister by the name of Jencken and of course everyone imagined that prodigies would issue from so gifted a family. After the birth of the child it was reported that these marvels had begun to occur. The child seized at the age of five months a pencil and wrote a long edifying message in clear script. But before he was fifteen his mother had denounced Spiritualism as humbuggery and had said that no single item of it had its source in the realm of the supernatural. By 1865 the new movement had found its way to the Motherland but a series of exposures decimated the ranks there after 1873. McCabe declares that almost every prominent medium there was detected in fraud between 1874 and 1884. Henry Slade for a time restored the drooping prestige of the movement, but within a few weeks he was in the hands of the police.

IV

So it goes. The controversy begins. The sceptics and scoffers assail the validity of the practices and the mediums strike back. The result is that the whole story of Spiritualism since the excesses which a credulous public gulped gladly enough in the early days has been a story of controversy and testing. It amounts to *You didn't!* and *I did!* Pushed to a corner, the mediums assign their failure to evil spirits or to the hypnotism of sceptics in the circle, and since a vast proportion of the human race is only too glad to believe that we can communicate with the dead, no end of exposure has the slightest effect upon that portion of the public who embrace the faith.

Anyone who wants a thorough and well documented statement of the case against the work of mediums may

refer to Houdini's book, *A Magician Among the Spirits.* Houdini wanted badly, as badly as any man could, to believe that we can communicate with the departed. He speaks of his mother in heaven as though he were an evangelist making a plea for sinners. He went so far as to make solemn compacts with fourteen of his best friends, by which signs were arranged and it could be easily determined if they communicated with him after their departure. He was a man who would have embraced Spiritualism if he could have found anything in the least authentic in its methods. But, after twenty-five years of intensive study and observation, he ended by denouncing it for precisely what its founders called it, a fraud.

A second fact that gives credence to his verdict is the astounding reputation he has for mystifying a critical as well as a credulous public. All over the world he has gone, performing feats that the most meticulous observer declared to be impossible. Yet he has never assigned these feats to the work of supernatural powers. He simply does them because he knows magic. And that, says Houdini, is precisely what the mediums do. His verdict is: "I have not found one incident that savoured of the genuine. If there had been any real unalloyed demonstration to work on, one that did not reek of fraud, one that could not be reproduced by earthly powers, then there would be something for a foundation. But up to the present time everything I have investigated has been the result of deluded brains or those which were too actively willing to believe." [9] He attended over a hundred seances during his last trip abroad in 1919 and he has at his command the largest library on Spiritualism in the world. Yet "nothing I have ever read concerning the so-called Spiritualist phenomena has impressed me as being genuine."

J. Hewat McKenzie, in his book *Spirit Intercourse,* in common with not a few other Spiritualists, goes so far as to assign supernatural powers to Houdini, and describes some of his stunts to prove the point. He claims that Houdini has the power from on high but simply refuses to

[9] Houdini, *op. cit.,* p. XXIX.

admit it. Which may be perfectly true, but Houdini took the stunts to which Hewat refers and said that his dematerialization was nothing but a trick, and that he could prove it any time. The chief stunt referred to is the one in which Houdini escaped from a sealed tub of water at the front of the stage and appeared at the back of the stage twenty seconds later.

In a sketch of this kind I shall be able to cite only a few of the cases in which the most prominent mediums have turned out to be frauds. Houdini knew Ira Davenport of the famous Davenport Brothers, who elaborated upon the simple knockings and got some rather startling effects. They were accompanied on their tours by the Reverend Dr. Ferguson, who made a little speech at the outset of the performance and left the impression with the audience that they were witnessing actual manifestations of the supernatural. Ira and his brother William thought it would be better showmanship not to disenchant the public, and they let it go at that. In fact, both of their parents died believing that their boys were the conveyors of supernatural powers. But, as I say, Houdini got to know Ira before he died. While playing in Australia he had heard that William was buried there. Accordingly he went to his grave and found it in wretched condition. He beautified it, and in appreciation of this act, Ira told him, upon his return to New York, of the famous Davenport rope tie, a secret that not even the family of the Davenport brothers had ever learned. From him he learned, too, that the performance of the brothers with Ferguson, involving the use of cabinet, rope tricks, bells, and various horns and musical instruments, was executed entirely by means of physical dexterity and showmanship.

Then there was Daniel Douglas Home, he who rubbed shoulders with the potentates of the earth and finally died a wretch, "from a terrible spinal disease," says Madame Blavatsky, "brought on through intercourse with 'Spirits.' " He was a genial, debonair fellow whose fondness for jewelry may be put down as his besetting sin,

for it led to a great many others. He had the appearance of being ill, and he assumed a rather pious expression which won him his way to the hearts of a great many kindly old ladies. He was, on the whole, a man of charm and intellect, a gentleman who moved in the best society and who accustomed himself to its manners. For example, he charged no fees for his sittings, but somehow his friends managed to keep him in luxury. He performed always as a guest. Houdini reports that Robert Browning attended one of Home's seances. The poet had grown somewhat perturbed over his wife's earnest interest in the new faith, and so was in the mood for a showdown. When a face was materialized and said to be that of a son who had died in infancy, Browning seized the materialized head and found it to be the bare foot of the medium. Incidentally, Browning had never lost an infant son.

In his day, which was a glorious one, Home had the honour of duping celebrities. Not everyone grabbed his foot. In this country he performed to the satisfaction of William Cullen Bryant, and it was shortly after this that friends raised the cash for his invasion of Europe. There he numbered among his patrons the Emperor and Empress of France and the Czar of Russia. He lived for weeks at a time in the palace of the Czar, and during one of these stop-overs he dematerialized some of the royal jewels. They were found later in his hip pocket. In England he prevailed upon the spirit of a widow's husband to adopt him and for a long while the spirit, through the widow, provided sumptuously for him. He received from her a payment of seven hundred pounds a year and later she made over a large fortune to him. This she soon sued to recover and did recover, the court saying in part that she was saturated with delusion and characterizing Spiritualism, according to the evidence, as "a system of mischievous nonsense well calculated to delude the vain, the weak, the foolish, and the superstitious." This decision was rendered in 1868, and it had about as much effect upon Home's reputation as the recantation of the Fox sisters had on the movement as a whole. He went

merrily on and in 1872 he gave several seances with Sir William Crookes, who pronounced him "a man whose perfect genuineness was above suspicion."

By far the grossest fake Spiritualism ever foisted upon humanity was that of Ann O'Delia Diss Debar. Her fraudulence stank so high into heaven that even the Spiritualists reluctantly disowned her; she is one of the fallen apostles, a Spirit Judas, I should say. How she has escaped depiction in the midst of the contemporary rage for biography is a question fortunately out of my province to answer. She would reward any man who would prowl through the frightening corridors of her earthly life. Yet the meticulous biographer would have trouble with details, for we do not know when or where she was born, nor do we have the slightest trace of her death. We only know that her victims ranged from poor bereaved nit-wits to some of the shrewdest fellows on the Street, and that her deals occasionally ran into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It is supposed by those who have taken the pains to inquire that she was the daughter of a political refugee by the name of Salomen who settled in Kentucky, and that she was born in 1849, though there are no documents to indicate it. She left home before she reached the age of puberty and was not heard of again until her father found her moving proudly and easily among the bloods of Baltimore society. At that time she posed as a member of the European aristocracy and the Baltimore four hundred were only too glad to have a woman so celebrated at their tables. She had not yet taken up Spiritualism as a means of getting what she wanted. She would simply worm her way into the affections of the younger set, then explain that she needed fifty thousand or more and that her banker in Bavaria was often careless in sending checks the moment she needed them worst. The young men would advance the money—so agreeably, in fact, that she swindled the lot of them out of a quarter of a million.

Sin would have its way with her, however, and it was not long until she was in serious straits. She took up the

smoking of opium cigarettes and soon lay in a hospital, suffering from complete nervous exhaustion. While there she attempted to stab the nurse and attendant and was in consequence confined to an asylum for the insane. The authorities found in her not the slightest trace of insanity and after a year she was released. It was then that she found her General Diss Debar, married him, and used him as a means of entrée to the best society of the day.

The first of her victims was Luther R. Marsh, a brilliant New York attorney. She gave him messages purporting to come from his recently deceased wife, which he accepted with relish, and Ann O'Delia Diss Debar had found her calling. She would be a medium. By the high cunning that marked all of her movements, she prevailed upon Marsh to transform his home at 166 Madison Avenue into a Spiritualist Temple of which she was the High Priestess. Here she did a thriving business, restricting herself entirely to a clientele drawn from the upper classes. Things were going well for the enterprise when the spirit of Marsh's daughter suggested during one of the seances that he deed his property to Mrs. Diss Debar. Marsh readily consented, the deeds were drawn, and the whole hoax would have been complete had not the relatives of the attorney intervened and thrown the case into the courts. Ann and her husband were arrested and held for trial.

During the trial that followed, Ann fortunately received from the spiritual world advice to return the property. This advice, she said, came from Cicero and "his colleagues in the council of ten." It was also during the trial that Carl Hertz, a professional conjuror and mesmerist of no mean repute, proved to the satisfaction of the court that all of the medium's spells were bound by a clever application of ordinary physical law. To demonstrate his contention he was good enough to perform her own tricks in the open court.

But Marsh's faith was unshaken by the exposures. He gave hearty assent to a personal communication that he had received concerning his wife from St. Peter, and this was read into the records of the court. Nor was the jury

as a whole any too sure that the woman was a fraud. Eleven of its members were, but the twelfth, on learning that Ann was an illegitimate daughter, said he thought she ought to receive a square deal, with the result that the jury disagreed and Ann and her husband went to Blackwell's Island for six months. When released they left America very shortly and reappeared in London under the names of Laura and Theodore Jackson. They were soon in trouble there for setting up an immoral cult called Theocratic Unity. In this cult Jackson was supposed to be Christ reincarnate and there had been devised a rather elaborate and smutty initiation ceremony involving young girls. One of the victims squealed, and made the allegation that Jackson had outraged her in the presence of his wife. This he denied, saying that he was physically incapable of it and asking for a medical examination. He got a legal one instead, and in 1901 Ann and her husband were sent to prison for seven years. They served five years and were released for spotless behaviour. Ann came to New York, then later went to Chicago, where she was known as Vera Ava. There she married wealth, but two years later she landed in the Joliet penitentiary. Once more she appeared on the American circuit, this time in New Orleans, where she was known as Baroness Rosenthal—then in 1909 she dropped out of existence and has never been heard of since. Her picture may be seen in any rogue's gallery.

Ann I do not regard as the model of mediums, nor have I sketched her sordid story to asperse Spiritualism. She was admittedly a fraud, yet her most piteous victim would not admit it. She is typical in that she preyed upon the bereavement of a man of wealth by means of alleged preternatural communications. She is also typical of a large host of adventurers who were attracted to the movement by the chance it gave for gain. And it is quite possible that, had she not been humiliated by a magician in the court room, or, let us say, had she got none too far with Luther Marsh, she might have stood today in one of those special niches which the Spiritualists chisel for their saints. She illustrates very well the fact that presti-

digitation for economic gain and under the guise of supernatural power has played a gross and conspicuous part in the history of Spiritualism.

Space will not allow me to tell of the invention of spirit photography by a devout Dr. Garnder and a Mr. William Mumler, and of the big trial that resulted in New York, Judge Edmonds testifying for the state and P. T. Barnum for the defence; nor to tell of Eusapiax Palladino, the conceded marvel of all mediums. But the story is much the same. The devout are ready to concede that the Lord is in the whirlwind, and the magicians and sceptics are doubtful. The tests are made and the result is never satisfactory. So it is that the progress of Spiritualism has continued unabated in the face of all sorts of ridicule and detection, for the sufficient reason that it teaches people what they want to believe and offers a machinery that works nine times out of ten to demonstrate its teaching. Its chief tenet is that we can communicate with loved ones who have gone before; its method is a practice which devout and credulous people regard as divine and which others regard as legerdemain. The essential phenomena, however, are there. Spiritualism has its machinery and if that machinery occasionally falls down, why, the same may be said of any religion.

V

We must not forget that it is a religion and not a stage performance. The essential question does not seem to me to be whether the mediums actually work by natural means, but whether or not people who attend their sittings believe they work by preternatural means. The answer here is obvious. The worshippers approach their service as a religious act. They expect to have something accomplished which will give them a sense of security and peace in an uncertain universe. They generally get it. After all, it is rather difficult to determine just where the natural leaves off and the supernatural begins, just what is accomplished by nature and what is accomplished by God. A group of Southern Presbyterians may assemble to

pray for rain. I have seen that often enough, and I have seen them to all appearances invoke the help of the Lord quite successfully to get what they wanted. Every religion has its priests, its paraphernalia, its instruments and devices for cajoling the divine good will. If these instruments happen to fail in any instance, the blame is placed quickly upon the instruments and upon those who use them. It is the same with Spiritualism. I do not marvel that the exposures have had little or no effect upon it as a religion. Hundreds of thousands have approached its shrines bent upon getting something through control of supernatural forces. They knew what they wanted and they got it, and whatever the critics of Spiritualism may say, they cannot deny that it satisfies, through its elaborate machinery, the craving of its followers for security and comfort. That is about all any religion has ever hoped to do or ever can do.

We need not be surprised, then, at the faith of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sir Oliver Lodge. Their scientific attitude simply doesn't carry over into the field of their religion. "Sir Arthur *believes*. In his great mind there is *no* doubt," says Houdini, who knew the novelist intimately for years and studied his attitude minutely. He still insists that the Fox sisters were genuine and believes that Home and Palladino will some day be canonized. He is convinced that the nice old lady mediums could do nothing wrong, and his personal experience is adequate testimony to his faith. "Six times," he says, "I have spoken face to face with my son, twice with my brother and once with my nephew, all beyond doubt in their own voices and on private matters, so for me there is not, nor has been for a long time, any doubt." He began in 1919 to traverse Great Britain with marvellous energy and enthusiasm; his good work continued until the spring of 1920, when the literature of exposure began to be written all over again.

Sir Oliver Lodge wrote nothing on Spiritualism prior to 1904 and his aggressive interest was not manifest until after the World War, when the feeling of crisis and bereavement prepared the country once more for the

Spiritualist message. Sir Oliver lost a son who was very dear to him, and much of his communication since that time has been with that son. In his book, *Raymond,* he has included a description of the next world which goes into such detail that it tells of flowers and cattle and dogs and houses, and even cigars.

The approach of both these distinguished men is fundamentally religious. That I do not mean as any reflection upon their veracity or intelligence, for there is much in the statement that man is incurably religious. He finds it difficult to lay aside his scientific attitude when he finds his sense of security and peace threatened. The belief of these two men rises from something which is dearest to their emotional natures, and the fact that they are scientists in one field does not make them affective skeptics in all fields. As Houdini phrases it, "The fact that they are *scientists* does not endow them with any special gift for detecting the sort of fraud used by mediums, nor does it bar them from being deceived, especially when they are fortified in their belief by grief."

In point of fact, Houdini himself was not an able judge of Spiritualism. He could doubtless detect with more accuracy than Sir Oliver Lodge the method by which the medium raised or threw over a chest of drawers with her toes or reproduced the face of a maiden aunt on her silken shin. But what of that? All of us are not magicians any more than all of us are scientists, and the inquiry into the validity and soundness of Spiritualist practices must be largely bootless. Scientists can never quite rid themselves of the impression that they are looking upon a certain experiment alleged to prove the supernatural, and magicians have the feeling that they are at a circus and commissioned to break up the show if possible. Both miss the point rather sadly. A Spiritualist seance is a religious service and for those souls who attend it it does not greatly matter that a magician may claim to perform all the stunts of the medium. They are not after stunts; they are after solace. They want a friendly universe. Western farmers have little or no concern with the judgment of scientists if the village prayer meeting has

been followed by a gulley-washer. The divine element eludes the investigator, if his purpose be that of honest inquiry and examination.

What the public believes is hardly as important as what the sanctum believes. Regarding this there can be no doubt. In its definition of principles, The National Spiritualist Assembly of America affirms that "the existence and personal identity of the individual continues after the change called death." It affirms, moreover, that communication with "the so-called dead is a fact scientifically proven by the phenomena of Spiritualism." Spiritualist belief further has it that we carry a portion of our coporeality with us into higher realms, for "after the change called death, the spirit is still clothed with matter, but of a more ethereal kind." Given this belief, it explains a number of phenomena to the satisfaction of anyone who is not bent upon irrelevant inquiries. We learn further that "the best imponderable emanations of the earth gravitate to what we call the spiritual world and help to form its substance." In short, Spiritualism arranges the world, even the cosmos, to suit its purposes. It does not rely solely upon the dexterity of the priests of the craft, but rather the whole system is buttressed by an imagined world. Still more briefly, it is a religion.

The manual of the church proceeds to define and sanctify the various kinds of mediumship and to arrange them into various holy orders, such as are to be found in every standard church of Christendom. The advantages of these varying kinds of mediumship are properly catalogued. We are informed, for example, that trance mediumship, "when there is a total unconsciousness in the medium to events taking place in the mundane sphere, is advantageous because it affords protection from the audience." It has an added advantage for there is danger that the medium "might be aroused to too much speculation by the novel ideas which the spirit expresses."

In the manual are to be found carefully prepared instructions for the establishment of a church in a new community, an album of the traditions once and for all delivered to the Fox sisters, and a deal of lore that has

sprung up since that day. There is an order of worship, a series of highblown readings designed to promote faith in the phenomena, and such information for the reassurance of the faithful as the story that it was Nattie Maynard who counselled "that grand, wise, and tenderhearted man, Abraham Lincoln, to issue the Emancipation Proclamation." And: "Furthermore, Alexander the Second, of Russia, also freed twenty millions of serfs by the request of his Spirit Father, Nicholas the First."

We can readily see that table rapping, bells in the cabinet, spirit photographs, levitation, materializations and dematerializations, are but the effects of Spiritualism, the machinery of the cult. There is sentiment and theology beneath it all. An ecumenical congress is held by the Spiritualists every three years. There are today over two hundred distinct papers and magazines devoted to the interests of the ism. Churches have been built, temples erected, societies organized, and a Children's Progressive Lyceum instituted. The religion of Spiritualism has followed, to the point of organizing the children, the methodology and order of the other institutionalized religions. In America there is a national assembly with twenty-two state auxiliaries, with over five hundred affiliated local societies, and many that are not yet affiliated. It stands prepared and equipped for the purpose of giving the world its message.

At the pilgrimages made to the Hydesville Cottage, which has of late been moved to Lily Dale, New York, the headquarters of the Spiritualist activity in America, the worshippers each year place a wreath on the steps and consecrate themselves anew to the "service of truth demonstrated." We must not forget that the event which took place at Hydesville was of divine significance. It has meaning over and above its importance as the birthday of modern Spiritualism. It signified the willingness of the inhabitants of another world to pay us heed and advise us in the solution of our problems. It was a distinct and unprecedented movement on the part of God to capture the complete allegiance of sinful man. It occupies in Spiritualist circles a place equal to that of Bethle-

hem in Christian circles; indeed the new dispensation, like that inaugurated by Joseph Smith, was of greater importance than the Christian era. Like Bahaism, Spiritualism is the culmination of previous revelations. Cadwallader refers to the Hydesville house as a place where "through the mediumship of the little Fox girls there came the glad tidings of great joy that proved to a world fast passing into materialism that death did not end all —that the tomb was only a covered bridge, and that our loved ones, radiant with the light of immortal life" were waiting just beyond. It was, in a word, a new gospel, as far above Christianity as Christianity was above Judaism.

The shrine at Lily Dale has become a highly magnetized centre of spirit manifestation. The friends now in the spiritual world who desire to make themselves known find conditions here exceptionally favourable. It has been carefully fitted out with the furniture of the period and even the murdered pedlar's trunk is to be found there. It is reported too that the murder of that unlucky fellow can easily be reproduced today by mediums and that even the gurgle of his death gasp is distinctly audible. Everything about it has some significance, even to the name of the man who moved it there. That name is B. F. Bartlett, and in connexion with his gracious act, W. J. Coleville in *Hydesville in History* remarks: "It seems an interesting coincidence that while Benjamin Franklin was the principal spiritual initiator of the Rochester knockings, Mr. Bartlett, who was forcibly inspired to remove the historic property, rejoices in the possession of this illustrious cognomen." Cadwallader reports that, in fact, since the removal of the cottage the demonstrations of power have been greater than ever before. Not only can one hear, through the mediumship of Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Franklin Bartlett, the gasps emitted by the pedlar at the time he was murdered, but even the digging in the cellar at the time the body was buried. Cadwallader assures us that Mr. and Mrs. Bartlett stand ready to make affidavits to these facts, if necessary.

III

THE HOUSE OF DAVID

I

THE death and final decomposition of Christ's Younger Brother, coupled with his conspicuous failure to rise on the third day, brings to its close a grim and sordid story in the history of American fanaticism. The stage was set for a miracle, but Benjamin Purnell failed to deliver, and the result is that the Israelite House of David finds itself now in a state of apostolic indecision, with its Seventh Messenger in a grave of shame and its cardinal tenet of the immortality of the body openly upset. Internal dissension rocks the body and it cannot be long now until it has gone the way of all spiritual flesh.

It is unfortunate that the story must concern itself chiefly with Benjamin Purnell's concupiscence. There are other features more important, and if one follows merely the course of Benjamin's depredations one gets the impression that there has been nothing but hilarious lechery in the House of David since its founding twenty-five years ago. The truth is that, apart from the substantiated charges against the Seventh Messenger, no other immorality has ever been alleged against the devotees of the cult. The members, some five hundred in all, are a worshipful and trustful body of people, as sober as Mormons and as simple and lovable as Dukhobors. A great many of them perform common and skilled labour in Benton Harbor, Michigan, and I have the testimony of flippant infidels that they are eminently worthy of their hire. Nor are those who remain at the colony for work entirely given over to mystic contemplation. There are male and female orchestras much in demand for dances and

the male division does business under the secular name of "The Bewhiskered Princes of Jazz." The House owns an extensive and valuable plant, comprising residences, parks, offices, shops, hotels, farms and other properties of much value—the worth of the whole being estimated at three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. Its grounds form the show place of Berrien County and it is claimed that over two hundred thousand persons visit its amusement park during the summer season. Two base ball teams, one for the road and one for home exhibitions, are maintained and play a high grade of ball. Several years ago one member of the road team proved himself sufficiently capable at first base to draw an offer from the Chicago White Sox; the offer, however, was contingent upon his shaving his beard and cutting his hair, which he declined steadfastly to do.

But the story turns inevitably upon Benjamin. He was in his palmy days a striking and picturesque figure, with flowing and well groomed hair and beard, a broad-brimmed white hat, and immaculate white clothing. He wore a gold chain about his neck and carried his two hundred pounds of muscle and bone with commanding dignity. He was never cheapened by vulgar contact with his followers—if some twenty young girls be excepted—for he knew the value of remaining behind the veil of the temple. Few of his most trusted followers ever talked with him at any length and even the closest of them often cooled their feet before an audience. To his aloofness he added a strict and intractable system of discipline and a method of inculcating a spirit of precise obedience to his commands. On one occasion he rebuked a venerable member of the cult for allowing members of the girls' orchestra to receive ice cream sodas from an appreciative merchant in the city. He was a shrewd if unlettered prophet. He prohibited unnecessary conversation and visiting and he forestalled the formation of cliques by frequently moving the sleeping quarters of the people and by requiring them to make full and thorough confession of their minutest movements. Indeed, he had his organization worked out with a consistency and foresight alto-

gether admirable, and if it had not been for his penchant for the company of young girls and the repeated rumours to which this gave rise, he would probably have kept sufficient hold upon the body to accomplish his resurrection and thus furnish the miracle that was needed to make his followers the chosen people of the world. But he came into conflict with a gentile society which did not accept his messiahship; charges which were either doubted or excused within the colony became causes for court action and a decision was finally rendered banishing him from his colony.

The House of David is tied up with a series of cults having their origin in England in 1792. At that time Joanna Southcott appeared as the first angelic messenger. She reached the climax of her career when, becoming large of body, she announced that she was to bear a son of divine origin on October 19, 1814. At the appointed hour Joanna went into a trance and passed into her grave, —a miscarriage of immaculate conception. Thus the cult of the seven angelic messengers began. Various others followed the precedent of Joanna. John Wroe stirred England between 1822 and 1848 as the fifth messenger and James Jezreel gave his message out during the period of 1871 to 1881. At the time of Benjamin Purnell's manifestation most of the followers of the other messengers had dispersed, though remnants of the John Wroe organization remained.

It was in line with these precedents that Benjamin revealed himself to be the Seventh and consummating Messenger. The text which he fulfilled is found in Revelation 10:7, "But the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Not that Benjamin was the first to claim the final role in this angelic drama. Michael Mills of Detroit had set up his own hierarchy during the Nineties, but his lustre as a messiah was somewhat dulled by the fact that he was convicted of statutory rape on the daughter of a member of the colony, wrought as a claimed religious rite. Mills, however, left no written message,

and the orthodox followers of David today regard him as the eighth or false messenger, foretold and consigned to perdition.[1]

With Mills out of the running the stage was prepared for Benjamin Purnell. With Mary Purnell he had been a member of the Mills colony from 1892 to 1896. He was born in Kentucky in 1861. He was first married in 1877, living with his wife for two years and finally deserting her and the one daughter who resulted from the marriage. In 1880 he appeared before a justice of the peace in Ohio and acknowledged that he and Mary Stollard were husband and wife. A suit for divorce from his first wife was filed but never prosecuted. Since she is still alive, Benjamin began and carried on his career as the Seventh Messenger as a bigamist. For years he and Mary lived in Richmond, Indiana, where he plied his trade as a broom maker and where there fell into his hands the *Flying Roll* of Jezreel as the sixth messenger. He readily accepted the faith of the seven angelic messengers and some time before 1892 he and Mary went to Detroit, where they joined the colony of Mills. The records of that colony show that in 1892 he was one of the Four Pillars of the colony. The two of them remained at this colony for four years after Mill's arrest and conviction, making frequent sallies into the countryside to bear the message and rake in converts. It was as the cock crew on the morning of the 12th of March, 1895, that the spirit of the Lord came upon him and he felt welling up in him the Seventh Message. He kept discreetly quiet about his pregnancy but the secret got out and he was promptly expelled for his treason to Mills. The next six years were spent as a roving evangelist and street preacher, Benjamin plying his trade like Paul of old and preaching when occasion allowed. All this time he was working on *The Star of Bethlehem,* that classic pronunciamento which should give his message to the world of sin and greed. *The Star* was completed in Fostoria, Ohio in 1902

[1] For a full and readable review of the history of the House of David, see the opinion of Judge Louis H. Fead in the action brought by the Attorney General of Michigan to abate a public nuisance.

and Benjamin was ready for his manifestation. With six friends picked up in Ohio, Benjamin and Mary moved upon Benton Harbor, Michigan. A family of carriage makers accepted Benjamin as the seventh messenger and as a token of their faith joined the gathering of the lost tribes of Israel. A business of more than seventy-five thousand dollars was sold and the proceeds turned over to the Israelite House of David. With this money the present site of the colony near Benton Harbor was acquired and the assemblying of the saints began in earnest. In 1903 the remaining adherents of John Wroe in Australia cabled Benjamin that they had seen his Message and were prepared to accept him. With Mary he left Benton Harbor immediately and visited the John Wroe Church in Melbourne in a dramatic midnight appearance, with the result that eighty-six of the John Wroe members accepted Benjamin and returned with him to Benton Harbor. This pentecostal ingathering is described as follows by Benjamin in his diary:

> We entered the Old House one night while they were holding their 42nd annual watch meeting—and here were fulfilled some very vital prophecies of John; and a little trouble, but no one hurt. Finally we all got ready for our homeward-bound trip, and we brought 85 people with us, and came through the Indian Ocean into the Red Sea. Very interesting indeed! Through the Red Sea into the Mediterranean, and homeward into the Atlantic, landing at New York, and home to that country from whence we came. Heb. 11–15.[2]

Shortly after the return of the natives another but smaller group came from Australia. In 1906 missionaries were sent to England and they brought back seventeen converts to swell the ranks. Preachers were sent in every direction and soon the membership of the colony grew to the five hundred that it has maintained regularly since those early years.

II

The whole scheme of the House of David, from its superb business organization to the fradulent use of re-

[2] *Shiloh's Messenger of Wisdom,* Jerusalem, 10th Month, 23rd Year of the New Creation, p. 6.

ligion as a means of supplying the sex life of its founder, rests upon a clever bit of exegesis. We have in its credo a broom maker's interpretation of Holy Writ. The cardinal tenet is of course Benjamin's inspiration. He was the Seventh Messenger, and that messenger had a function to perform. He was to complete God's manifestation to man and provide for the assembling of 144,000 males and an equal number of females who should never die. It was with this high purpose that Benjamin and Mary headed for Australia, and it was with the belief that the immortality of the body would come to pass that at least a fraction of the elect accepted the message, sold their property, and came to Benton Harbor. The same trouble with the millennium has been experienced among the members of the House of David as among the followers of Pastor Russell. When *The Star of Bethlehem* was first published, it was prophesied that the glad hour would begin in 1906, but when it failed to show up Benjamin explained that everything was really in the Lord's hands and that he would bring his events to pass in due season. According to the testimony of W. T. Dewhirst, the attorney of the colony, the prophecy of Matthew that, "This generation shall not pass away until these things be fulfilled" had reference to the generation alive in 1916. All those alive in 1916 who were members of the colony and fell not from the faith should live for ever.

But still the Lord tarries.

There is some similarity between the House of David and the Shakers, for the modern ascetics hold that evil derives from sexual intercourse and that the immortality of the body can only be attained by eliminating evil from the blood. This requires a total abstinence even among married couples. Adam and Eve were originally pure, but evil was communicated to Eve through sexual intercourse with the serpent, and to Adam by intercourse with Eve. It is of course not impossible to achieve a "bloodless state," in which event intercourse will again be permissible, for children born of such intercourse will not be conceived in sin. It is well to bear this tenet in mind as we hear of the exploits of Benjamin. Also, we must

note the four divisions of man which are described in the literature of the cult. There is first the natural man with evil in his blood; second, the Son of Man, with cleansed blood; third, the Son of God, the man without blood and immortal; fourth, the God Man, with illuminated body at the close of the millennium. There is here the same preoccupation with sex to be found either in "The Bachelor Father" or among the Buchmanites. The whole ritual rests upon the conviction that sex is sin; death follows sin and therefore follows sex. The House of David shows complete unconcern for its dead. It is considered unclean to be in a chamber when life passes out, and a corpse is turned over immediately to an undertaker who buries it without ceremony of any sort.

The manner in which Benjamin was regarded by his followers came into dispute during the trial of 1927. The state claimed that Benjamin pretended to be the Younger Brother of Christ, the angel Gabriel, the Son of Man, and various other characters denoting his blood or bloodless kinship with deity. To this contention Judge Fead's decision gives credence, and he cites certain passages from the sacred writings which he believes can be construed only as showing Benjamin's claims to divinity. Two of these citations follow:

> Gabriel is his name spiritually and Benjamin is his name temporally. (I Star III)
>
> Benjamin is called the chosen of the Father, and blessed by his elder brother, Jesus, and is come into this visitation and out of the tribe of Benjamin cometh the Second Child. (I Star 19)

What Benjamin said in his books is not as important as what his followers believe in their daily lives. Several of the witnesses testified before Judge Fead that they thought Benjamin was God. And Ruth Wade, one of the women whom he is alleged to have ravished, said she felt she was entering the gates of heaven when she first entered his presence. Others would scamper joyously to their parents with the tidings that they had seen Brother Benjamin. His orders were carried out explicitly, even if they commanded perjury in gentile courts, and the whole

conduct of the colony was governed by the impulse to safeguard him from the persecution of the outside world. That he occupied a unique position in the colony, established a morality which transcended that of the world, and safely got away among his followers with the behaviour of a superman is obvious from the trial which finally silenced his voice for ever.

It was this trial which brought the House of David before America. It resulted from an action brought by the Attorney General of Michigan to abate a public nuisance which he claimed was maintained by the House of David. It need hardly be remarked that the House had always been unpopular with the people of Michigan. As early as 1908 a mob, inflamed by rumours of a misconduct on the part of Benjamin, raided the place after a mass indignation meeting. Other investigations had been conducted before by both the state and the federal governments, by those charged with the suppression of white slavery, but no criminal action had resulted. Of course the House has always been great news, and some of our eminent journals have from time to time carried sensational stories of its immoralities. The expected number of civil suits for the recovery of property which credulous members had given over to the communal treasury have occurred; but nothing of a grave and definite sort took place until the suits of Gladys and Ruth Bamford, two former members of the colony. They began suit against Benjamin upon the claim that he had debauched them in girlhood, and writs of capias were granted them in the Circuit Court of Berrien County; these writs, however, could not be served, for Benjamin had disappeared. He went into hiding after Christmas, 1922, avoided detection in two raids in 1923, and was finally discovered and arrested in November, 1926. Two young girls were found with him the night of his arrest, at least one of whom the court believes to have been with him for other than religious purposes. The state police who made the arrest were directed to his rendezvous by Bessie Daniels, who joined the host who accused Benjamin of statutory rape.

The action brought by the Attorney General came up

for hearing May 16, 1927. During the course of the trial practically every scandal on the House of David came out; its history—religious, commercial, social, and sexual—was reviewed at great length. The trial itself occupied fifty-one days, extending over a period of three months. The record of the case contains 15,000 pages of testimony from over 225 witnesses. Over 500 exhibits were introduced and 73 depositions taken. The eminently clear and informing decision of the presiding Judge, Louis H. Fead, covers over fifty columns of closely set newspaper print.[3] The upshot of the trial was the banishment of Purnell from the cult he had founded and dominated, an injunction prohibiting his seeing any of the girls of the colony save under surveillance, and the appointment of a receiver to take over its temporal affairs. A counter injunction was secured by the colony, restraining the enforcement of this decision, and the action is still pending to determine whether the House of David shall be put into the hands of an alien receiver. But the direst results were the death of Benjamin Purnell less than a month after the opinion was rendered, and the subsequent bickerings of Mary Purnell, his consort, and W. T. Dewhirst, both of whom are apparently seeking control. For the past few years Benjamin had been in ill health; at the trial he was a sad spectacle, testifying feebly from his cot before the bench.

The weight of the evidence given at this trial was more than enough to convince the Judge that Benjamin had been guilty of sexual intercourse with loyal and hoodwinked girls in the colony practically from the time of its founding to the time of his arrest in 1926. The supposition runs that he had first approached some of the older women of the colony in the early years of the cult but had been repulsed and had turned to the more impressionable members of the elect. Thirteen witnesses for the state testified that they had had sexual intercourse with Benjamin; other witnesses related specific acts of what the court termed "indecent behaviour and familiarity"; in addition there was an accumulation of testimony to

[3] See the Benton Harbor *News-Palladium,* November 10th and 11th, 1927.

show that Benjamin had told ribald stories to girls of his "inner circle" and that he had a habit of fondling them. Judge Fead pointed out in the course of his opinion that the seventh messenger had always shown a hankering for women and that he was for ever surrounding himself with girls who would do his will. The night of his arrest he was dressed only in his gym pants and the testimony indicates that he was coming from the room of one of the girls in the building. At Shiloh, one of the houses where he lived from 1908 to 1915, his apartment was on the second floor, and there were always girls on the second and third floors. In 1915 he moved to Benjamin's House another of the dormitories, but Mary remained at Shiloh. Mrs. Bamford, mother of two of the girls he is alleged to have debauched, testified during the trial that he took seven girls to live in his house. This testimony was not disputed by the defence. In the Diamond House, where he hid upon news of the Bamford charges, there was an extra room and one of the girls, caught dishabille, went to this room to dress following her arrest. On the occasion of his two other disappearances in the face of litigation, the testimony of the recent trial shows that he took young girls with him. Other testimony shows that he engaged in sexual intercourse with one girl in the presence of others.

His conquests seem to have been in the form of a religious ceremony. Irene Pritchard, one of the thirteen witnesses, testified that she submitted to Benjamin because she had been brought up to reverence him as a superman and thought he could do no wrong. All of the witnesses who said they had intercourse with him allege that he used the religious argument. It is written in *The Star:*

> You will be tested in many ways before you will be trusted with the greater charge. So be watchful in whatsoever position you are chosen. Many are, and will be accused of disobedience, as we are to be obedient to whatsoever we are told to do; till the time appointed of the Father; . . . You may be bidden to do things contrary to His holy word to see if you are on the watch. Sometimes man speaks and sometimes God-man; and if it is contrary to His word, it proves it is man. All will be tested to see if they lean upon man.

When we couple this passage from the writings of Benjamin with the fact that explicit obedience to him was enjoined upon all, we can understand why most of the witnesses claimed that they thought his first advances were for the purpose of testing their faith. As Judge Fead points out, "It would be difficult to frame a doctrine which would more surely permit approach without offence and a better alibi and more graceful retreat if the advance were resented."

III

Only two other conspicuous cases of unfailing devotion to the leader of the cult need be cited. The first is the series of suspicious group marriages which have taken place in the confines of the colony between the years of 1910 and 1923. The doctrine of Benjamin sets its face solidly against sexual intercourse even between man and wife. Total abstinence is required for achieving the "life of the body." This enforced abstinence of course will remain in force only until the period of immortality for the chosen sets in—sometime within in the next seventy-two years. But for the present the regulation is rigid and uncompromising, and the manner in which it has been adhered to is to be seen in the fact that only two children have been conceived and born in the colony. Two women upon becoming pregnant have been advised by Mary Purnell to leave. On the whole the law seems to have been explicitly obeyed among the vast bulk of those who accepted Benjamin Purnell as the seventh angelic messenger who should lead the righteous into a spotless paradise.

Without the privilege of cohabitation little incentive remained for marriages. The conduct of young men and women was carefully watched, and the normal motives for courtship and marriage were obviously under the ban. It was in view of these facts that the state inquired meticulously into the reasons why in 1910 thirteen couples were married, ten of the brides being under twenty-

one years of age. Later in the same year seven other couples were married, all of the brides being under twenty. During 1914 twelve couples were married. In 1923 there was a single marriage and a group marriage of six couples.

All of these unions took place under circumstances which the court regarded as suspicious. In each instance Benjamin Purnell was openly under the fire of scorpions, the name given those who left the House of David and attacked it, or else an investigation by state or national authority was on foot. The conclusion which both the press and the court reached after hearing testimony was that the girls were forced into matrimony to shield the seventh messenger. It would be an easy matter to lay their loss of virtue to their husbands in the event of a medical examination.

The first of these group weddings which occurred seven years after the establishment of the colony, was absolutely without precedent, and was contrary to the avowed principles of the faith. In the recent trial the state charged that these marriages were conceived with the single purpose of protecting Benjamin in the face of pending investigation and, in the opinion of the Judge, the defence offered no plausible explanation for an occurrence so extraordinary in an ascetic colony. The circumstances surrounding the incident are further darkened by the fact that Benjamin Purnell did not attend the weddings. Where he was could not be determined. Some of the witnesses said that he was around the colony, but the most of them testified that he went to Chicago, disguised in a Mrs. Pritchard's corset and dress.

Already criticism of Benjamin had reached such a height that on May 2, 1910 an affidavit was signed by fifty-four girls and women in the colony to the effect that they had not had intercourse with Benjamin and did not know of any who had. This public confession of innocence, coupled with the group marriages and the first disappearance of Benjamin, constitute the first conflict of the colony with the public morals. In reviewing the period, Judge Fead says:

Because of the practice for the first seven years of the life of the colony, a practice consistent with and beneficial to the faith, marriage became extraordinary, out of the beaten path, and could be accounted for only from a radical change of policy or because conditions of a serious nature required it. And when it first occurred in a time of grave charges, and was later celebrated in a wholesale manner at a period of sufficient trouble to drive Benjamin into hiding, an explanation is imperative to avoid ugly conclusions.

Other group marriages were similarly strange, and the court held that the defence failed to disclose any good reasons why so many girls were practically forced into marriage on short notice and always with scandal impending. The opinion of the court was that Benjamin Purnell was guilty of "immoral conduct with a considerable number of the girls of the colony."

These marriages brought to light another evidence of the solidarity to be found in Benjamin's religious cult. Not only were his commands explicitly obeyed in the matter of marriage in violation of the tenets of the faith, but he also issued pamphlets in the colony instructing the people at large how to testify in the event of an investigation. These constituted an order of perjury, in the opinion of the court, but need concern us only in the fact that they set above the laws of the gentiles the laws of the chosen. The morality within the cult was the morality of the elect. If it came into conflict with that of the world, it was simply unfortunate. Three witnesses testified in the last trial that if their daughters accused Benjamin of immorality they would not believe the charges. His disappearances in the face of warrants for his arrest were thoroughly justified in the eyes of the colonists by the analogy to the search of Herod for the child Jesus. During his last disappearance no questions were asked; the people went calmly about their business and accepted his right to escape the clutches of justice. In his last days, wasted though he was by tuberculosis and diabetes, his 200 pounds having dwindled to 116, some of his followers testified fervently that they knew with a knowledge not of this world that he would never die. And when he finally died he was pumped full of a non-poisonous em-

balming fluid and his followers firmly expected him to come forth from the grave on the third day.

His failure probably spells ruin for the curious cult which he generated. At present the colony is not accepting any new members, nor is it gravely concerned over the disposition that is to be made of its property. The Lord will take care of all that. Largely because the Seventh Angelic Messenger thought himself to be oversexed, the past gibbers and the future glowers on the saints at Benton Harbor, but they feel, as they have felt all along, that the hand of God is guiding them. Their unbending faith in the leader who corralled and disgraced them shows as well as any other single instance in history just what can be done by a man who uses religion adroitly. It is the story of an ignorant broom maker of the Kentucky wilds, a man without pretensions to learning who said in his best days that education was less useful than dung. It is the story of a bigamist who deserted one wife and made his second consort the high priestess of his cult, who gathered about him more than five hundred devotees through his addenda to Holy Writ and the messianic claims he propounded to other broom makers. He established a community on the solid rock of religious credulity and for twenty-five years maintained it successfully in the face of derision and investigation. And during that time he used his prophecies and his doctrine as the means of ravishing the virgins who presided in the holy temple of the faith. And when it was all over the vast majority of his sanctified throng stood by him in unwavering fidelity and expected him to overcome the last enemy of man with a miracle of resurrection. And it all took place in Benton Harbor, Michigan, in the Twentieth Century.

IV

RUSSELLISM

I

"Millions Now Living Will Never Die!"

ANYONE who has driven along an American highway and paid the slightest attention to the signs on telephone poles, rocks, mountainsides, and barns along the road is familiar with that assertion. Together with other mottoes and Scripture references conspicuously painted hither and yon, it has made Russellism a nationally advertised commodity. For the International Bible Students Association has left no stone unturned that might have a smooth belly upon which some warning of the impending millennium could be displayed.

During the six thousand years of the world's tragic existence God has allowed sin to flourish for reasons obvious to any close student of the Bible; all the while, however, his effort has been devoted to the selection of the faithful few in every age. These few he intends to make the rulers of the earth during the millennial reign of Christ when those now alive shall be given full opportunity for repentance and the gibbering dead shall be summoned from the tomb to have another try at holiness. Christ returned invisibly in 1914 (he will never be seen again in the flesh) and in the final Battle of Armageddon the devil is to be tossed into outer darkness and perfect peace shall reign upon the earth for evermore, save for a short period at the end of the first thousand years when the devil is to be given another fling at mankind; and at the end of that last round he is to be obliterated, together with any who persists in taking up with him. And since the great Battle of Armageddon may

commence any day now—it has already been unaccountably delayed for about fourteen years—it follows logically that millions now living shall never die.

In its broad aspect that is the meaning of the phrase familiar to every American. A cataclysmic event is in the offing; after that the earth is to be brought "to a state of Edenic paradise and made fit as a habitation for perfect man." And once the trials are over, "man, fully restored to perfection, will inhabit the beautiful earth during all the ages to come." That isn't the half of it but it suffices to show the high points of the doctrine and their correspondence to the millennial hope that has electrified every age since the days of Malchizedek.[1] Russellism as a body of doctrine is commonplace, but as it is expounded and distributed by the International Bible Students, it takes on an extravagance at once frightful and sublime.

No other sect in modern times has so completely captured the imagination of the unimaginative. In 1925 alone more than two million copies of Pastor Russell's

[1] Lactantius, a Latin Father affectionately called the "Christian Cicero," expounded in the Fourth Century A.D. a doctrine not unlike the Millennial Dawn of the late Pastor Russell. And someone, of course, has done it regularly every century before or since. The account of Lactantius is based on the Sibylline books and logically concludes that since God completed the creation in six days, the present world will last 6,000 years; and since the first man was created on the sixth day, the creation of the new man—the Christian people—marks the beginning of the last age of the world. First there will be a period of dire distress. Righteousness will diminish to a vanishing point, while wickedness will flourish as the green bay tree. Wars will wage throughout the earth. "There will be no faith among men, nor peace nor kindness nor truth, and thus also there will be neither security nor government nor any rest from evils." When 6,000 years of the world's existence have been completed, the Son of God will descend from heaven and execute judgment upon the wicked. He will raise the righteous dead and remain 10,000 years among them, ruling them in justice. The faithful who are alive at his coming shall not die, but shall continue alive throughout the millennium, producing an infinite number of holy offspring beloved of God. They who have been raised from the dead shall preside over the living as judges. The heathen will not be completely destroyed but will be made to serve the righteous who have been gathered within a sacred city. Here God Himself dwells. The moon will become as bright as the sun and the latter will increase seven fold. The earth will become miraculously fruitful; the mountains will drip with honey, wine and milk will flow through the rivers of the earth. At the close of the Millennium, God will enact final Judgment, when no nation save that of God only shall be left in the world. Then the heavens will be folded up, men changed into the likeness of angels, and the wicked raised to receive everlasting punishment, "burning for ever in perpetual fire in the sight of the angels and the righteous." See *The Millennial Hope* by Shirley Jackson Case.

works were printed and the total distributed up to the time of his death in 1916 exceeded twelve million copies. Of one title alone, *The Divine Plan of the Ages,* there had been five million copies put out, and the Students boast for this book a circulation greater than any book in the English language save that of the Bible. What is more, the literature of the Association has been translated into thirty-five languages. The books of Judge J. F. Rutherford, the Elisha upon whom the transforming mantle of the Prophet fell, have already approached the ten million mark. Throughout every country and state of the union and every province of Canada the work of the Association is being sedulously carried forward. The largest radio hook-up of 1927 was given over to broadcasting the address of Judge Rutherford upon the sacred principles of the order. It need hardly be added that no single heresy —not even that of modernism—has so raised the ire of orthodox ecclesiastics.

For the genius of this far-flung enterprise, we must look to the late Charles Taze Russell. During the course of his venerable ministry, he was pastor of more than twelve hundred churches here and abroad, earning, it seems to me, a full right to be called Pastor Russell, though he was never ordained. These churches he visited as God allowed, making an annual pilgrimage to London to address the brethren there. He spoke incessantly—often six and eight hours a day—and travelled as much as Bishop Asbury and the Apostle Paul combined. Indeed he was fiercely bent upon a pastoral mission when overtaken by cystitis at Dallas, Texas, in 1916, and was so earnestly set upon seeing the flocks he had promised to see that he visited Houston, San Antonio, San Francisco and was en route back to New York when, near the flea-bitten Texas town of Pampa, death felled him from behind. Brother Menta Sturgeon, a faithful lackey who had anxiously watched developments from the outset, saw that death was near. Accordingly he reports that he "finally called in the Pullman conductor and also the porter and said, 'We want you to see how a great man of God can die.' This sight deeply impressed them, espe-

cially the porter." The Pastor then "drew up his feet in the bed like Jacob of old" and passed away. "His drooping eyelids opened like the petals of a flower and disclosed those eyes—those wonderful eyes!"

This reluctance to leave even the gruesome death of the Pastor unadmired characterizes the whole attitude of Russell's followers. In the Preface to Pastor Russell's *Sermons,* published by his own society, we find the publishers saying that he is known the world around as "the most celebrated preacher of modern times":

> His explanatory writings on the Bible are far more extensive than the combined writings of St. Paul, St. John, Arius, Waldo, Wycliffe, and Martin Luther—the six messengers to the Church who preceded him. . . . When the history of the Church of Christ is fully written, it will be found that the place next to St. Paul in the gallery of fame as expounder of the Gospel of the Great Master will be occupied by CHARLES TAZE RUSSELL.

In *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence,* the journal that Russell established as his campaign organ, there appeared in May, 1925, the claim that he represented the angel referred to in Ezek. 9: 1–11. Pastor Russell "is undoubtedly this same angel, or seventh messenger of the Church" who "filled the office foreshadowed by the Prophet Ezekiel as represented in the man clothed in linen with a writer's inkhorn at his side."

Curiously, this saint was at one time a scowling infidel. He came, like most young men of the last century, from God-fearing parents and was in youth an earnest worker in the Congregational Church. He received his education from the common schools of Pittsburgh and from private tutors, suffering all the while from the fear of Christian torment in the after life. Evidently his youth was dominated by morbid pictures of a sizzling hell, for as a boy he used to go around the city of Pittsburgh every Saturday evening and write signs with chalk on the fences, warning people to attend Church on the following Sabbath that they might escape the ghastly torments of everlasting fire. Hell was as real to him as Adam's rib, and the thought of it was never pleasing. Hence, when at the age of seventeen he fell upon a doubt-

ing sinner and tried to convert him to the Lord, the sinner routed young Russell ingloriously and he, too, became an infidel. He simply could not accept the doctrine of eternal torment; thus he merrily threw down the whole Christian theology and spent the next three years of his life in studying Oriental faiths. These he found unworthy, and after a careful and painstaking study of Holy Writ he came to the comforting conclusion that the Bible did not teach the doctrine of hell. With this good news, he began at the age of twenty a ministry which lasted forty-two years and cheered the hearts of hill-billies in every nook and cranny of the democracy.

His earlier years were spent at Pittsburgh and Allegheny, but in 1909 he first came to New York, where he bought Bethel Chapel at 17 Hicks Street and later rented the Brooklyn Academy of Music for Sunday Services. He lived to take over for his expanded work the Brooklyn Tabernacle of Henry Ward Beecher and also to occupy the home of the sainted Beecher on Columbia Heights. Success clothed every movement of his public life, if his feats be judged by the severe measurements of statistics.

There was, however, hardly a time when the Pastor was not hopelessly involved in litigation or made the centre of a stern uproar. His domestic life was far from millennial. He declared in significant metaphor that "many of the Lord's most faithful children live in a matrimonial furnace of affliction." Seventeen years of his life were spent in the furnace. Thirteen years of the time were to all appearances happy, though "no children blessed the union." Then a dispute arose between the pair and that dispute had to do with the Pastor's manner of conducting *The Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*. As Pastor Russell explained it twenty years later, "She tried to get too much space for her writings in our publication and we had to cut her off. That's what made her leave me." Judge J. F. Rutherford, now head of the various associations which Russell bequeathed, says of the affair: "Being head of the house, Pastor Russell would not submit to his wife's dictating the manner of

his conducting his business affairs, and without notice she voluntarily separated herself from him in 1897." For nearly seven years, the Judge continues, she lived apart in a house provided by him. Then in 1903 she brought suit for separation. After five years of litigation and no end of scandal, this divorce was granted and the court handed down this opinion:

> His course of conduct toward his wife evidences such insistent egotism and extravagant self-praise that it would be manifest to the jury that his conduct toward her was one of continual domination that would necessarily render the life of any sensitive Christian woman a burden and make her condition intolerable.

In the course of the trial evidence was offered to show that the Pastor had been familiar with the help. This evidence, however, strikes me as more amusing than incriminating. In response to a direct question, Mrs. Russell admitted that she did not accuse her husband of adultery, though she testified under oath that after one of his affairs he said to her:

> I am like a jellyfish. I float around here and there. I touch this one and that one, and if she responds, I take her to me; if not, I float on to others.

One of his affairs was supposed to have been with Rose Ball, who is said by the enemies of Russell to have been "a young stenographer," and by his friends to have been "one of the family." She was prominently mentioned in the divorce suit, and the Brooklyn *Eagle,* which has waged an arduous campaign to exterminate the Russellites, charges that Rose married a convert and was scurried off to Australia before she could be subpœnaed. Judge Rutherford's explanation follows:

> She came to them in 1889, a child of ten. She was treated as a member of the family. She was an orphan. She kissed both Mr. and Mrs. Russell goodnight each evening when she retired. They treated her as their own child.

The Judge goes on to say that the alleged incident took place in 1894, according to Mrs. Russell's testimony, and that the Ball girl "could not have been more than fifteen."

He makes the further point that Mrs. Russell continued to live with her husband for seven years before the suit was filed. Moreover, no mention is made of Rose in the complaint.

It was further alleged that Russell had been alone in a room with Emily Matthews, another member of the household, and that the door was locked at the time. To this the Pastor replied:

> Dear, you understand all about that. You know that was the room in which the slops were emptied and the water was carried, and that was the morning that Emily Matthews was sick, and you told me of it and asked me to go up and see her. And when they were running in and out with water pails I turned the key for half a minute until I could have a chance to hear quietly what she had to say, and there wasn't the slightest impropriety in anything that was done. . . .

We may close the discussion of this unfortunate episode with the Pastor's own affidavit of his unblemished purity: He affirms before a notary and due witness

> *That* I never was guilty of immorality toward any person, and *Furthermore,* I have never cohabited with any person at any time and, *Further,* I have never desired to do so.
> Witness my hand and seal to this declaration this the 28th of September, 1911.

Then there was the scandal of "Miracle Wheat." Over articles published in connexion with this wheat, the Pastor sued the Brooklyn *Eagle* for a hundred thousand dollars, albeit unsuccessfully. The charge made by the *Eagle* was that the Pastor sold ordinary wheat as "Miracle Wheat," the retaliation of Pastor Russell was that thirty bushels of genuine miracle wheat—the superiority of which was duly established—was presented to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and sold for a dollar a pound in much the same way that ladies at a church social sell atrocious pies for exorbitant prices. Eleven witnesses at the *Eagle* trial testified that the wheat was really superior, and the members of the Russell organizations claim that the proceeds of the sale were directed to worthy enterprises and that nothing went to Russell as a prerequisite.

With all the tedious hours spent in court and before notaries, Pastor Russell found enough time to turn out an immense amount of spiritual work. It is said that he travelled thirty thousand miles a year making pastoral calls; we have already noted that his written works exceeded those of the other six messengers of the Church. His editorial program was far-sighted enough, for the *Watch Tower* reports shortly after his death:

> Brother Russell's will provides for the continuance of the publication of the *Watch Tower,* for which he left ample manuscript to insure its publication for an indefinite period of time.

He fathered three enormous enterprises, supervised the distribution of tracts, dictated the policies, financial and spiritual, keeping so tight a reign on the whole enterprise that he even arranged before his death for the seating of the brethren around the table at the Home in Brooklyn. The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society was organized in 1884 and each contributor of ten dollars gets a share of voting stock. Toward the close of the Pastor's life there were two hundred thousand of these voting shares, yet there had never been a vote cast against Pastor Russell. His "Photo Drama of Creation" is said to have been shown to more than ten million people; it worked by means of a victrola that captured the Pastor's voice, and the whole arrangement rather anticipated the modern Vitaphone. Everywhere his ministry was attended by an enviable statistical success. In Boston, for example, more than two thousand people, according to the New York *Times,* were turned away from his last public appearance there.

Judge Rutherford gives the following report of the Pastor's books up to the time of his death. The numbers, it may be said, denote distribution rather than sale:

Food for Thinking Christians	1,450,000
Tabernacle Shadows	1,000,000
Divine Plan of the Ages	4,817,000
The Time Is at Hand	1,657,000
Thy Kingdom Come	1,578,000
What Say the Scriptures about Hell?	3,000,000

These publications have been translated into thirty-five different languages. To conserve the spirited work inaugurated by the Pastor, a Pilgrim Service was instituted by the followers of Russell. They offer the following report of work done in a single year (1912):

Engaged in Pilgrim Service	83
Miles Traveled	617,186
Towns Visited	6,672
Public Meetings	1,956
Semi-Public	3,287
Total Attendance	850,734

These Pilgrims are definitely routed and they continue to cover the country with a thoroughness hardly credible. Brother Dunn was at Abernathy, Texas, January 3 and 4, 1928, at Quitiqua January 8th, and at other points in the interim. So it is throughout the United States and Canada.

II

What is there in Russellism that so marvellously enthralls the people's soul? Certainly its founder is not sufficient explanation. Inherently, he was no more regal and heroic than, say, Calvin Coolidge. He had his virtues, to be sure, but in everything he did there was something just the least bit pathetic. Earth clung to him relentlessly. He was never admired by those who hated him. To read intimate accounts of his daily life is to suffer with the hero in a realistic novel; he was piteous and depressing. On his last jog across the continent he lost his valise at Kansas City because the brother in whose auto he was taken from the station was careless in putting it on the running board. The valise was recovered by means of a reward announced in the Kansas City papers but the Prophet got no word of it until he arrived at San Antonio. His hostess in that city drew from him the commendation, "She hath done what she could"; then we find her, a Sister Frost, willing "to break the alabaster box," and she gave the Pastor and his lackey enough money to

buy a Pullman compartment to California. As he finished his discourse in San Antonio, a friend took several photographs of him while he was resting, "which, being the last we hope they are the best." And so on. Undoubtedly he was photographed more times than any American, save perhaps Mr. Coolidge. He was enshrined by means of word and picture, but he was never more than a commonplace little man suffering the plaudits of his kind.

The explanation lies, I think, in the savoury and agreeable theology that the Pastor preached, and in the fact that its doctrines have been more widely and freely distributed than the literature of patent medicine. Russellism has spread like scandal by means of the printed word. Long ago the three agencies promulgating its teachings learned the value of putting these teachings in the hands of the populace. They became past masters at the art of economical bookmaking, with the result that I recently bought the three latest publications of the order for $1.18. These were full-size books, ranging from three hundred to four hundred pages in length, securely and not offensively bound, containing in one case twenty three-colour illustrations. The seven volumes of Pastor Russell's *Studies in the Scriptures,* called originally *The Millennial Dawn,* can be purchased for as little as three dollars. Really the Russellites have taken away every impediment which might hold back a reluctant public.

It should be noted that its theology is laid, according to its adherents, upon the secure foundation of Holy Writ. Russell claimed to make no departure from true Christianity; he rather claimed to lead an erring nation out of the wilderness and back to Bible Christianity. As he announced in his journal, "The *Watch Tower* does not assume a dogmatic attitude, but confidently invites a careful examination of its utterances in the light of God's infallible word." To this infallible word the Pastor studiously adhered. He disavowed any intent to found a new religion, but regarded himself only as an inspired interpreter of the Word of God as contained in the Holy Scriptures. His utterances contain as many Scripture

references as those of J. Frank Norris, and today there is hardly a paragraph in the writings of his followers that in not heavily bolstered by a long citation of holy documents. A book on Russellism is generally made up of seven parts Scripture and the other three parts comment, and the comment is plenteously sprinkled with parenthetical references to II Pet. 3:4; Jude 8:1; Gen. 5 1–11, and so on.

The first consoling thought that the Pastor got from his study of the Word was in reference to hell. He catalogued the references of the Bible to that dire region and concluded that it didn't exist and that its existence was never taught by Holy Writ; further, he decided that to teach its existence was a grave and frightful heresy.

With this conviction he began his public ministry. His popularity with the followers of Moody and Sam Jones can be readily imagined! We are prone to forget the place of honour assigned to hell in the gospel of the Nineteenth Century. Its place and importance were more acutely realized and resonantly defended than any doctrine of our own flippant age. It hung as an executioner's ax over the head of every sinner in every sordid hamlet of the countryside. And though the eloquent Bob Ingersoll had bellowed his denials from the platform of the local Opera House, he never quite carried conviction, for he was an infidel who junked everything else along with hell. Not so, Russell. Here was a teacher come from God who announced that hell was a myth and the Bible never taught it. There was the difference. One man said to him, "I am glad you turned the hose on hell and put out the fire." I am told that while lecturing in Waco, Texas, on the non-existence of hell, a sot rose to his feet in the back of the audience and shouted, "Stay with 'em, Pastor! We're dependin' on you." Obviously the idea of hell was never popular, even to the fleshly yokel who sinned on Saturday night only. Here was a chance to believe in Mother, Home and Heaven, yet rid oneself of the distasteful idea of roasting like a fowl upon the cosmic spit of a relentless Deity.

Along with hell went belief in an immediate glory

land. The righteous will of course have their reward, but not forthwith. The wages of sin is death, and the doctrine of immortality, taught by the clergy in all ages, was declared by Pastor Russell to be a monstrous fraud, a lie which proceeded from the mouth of the Devil himself. Thus death means obliteration for the time being —in fact, until the resurrection at the last trump. In his book, *Talking with the Dead,* Judge Rutherford says:

> The conclusion of the immortality of the soul is based upon Satan's lie and is wholly unsupported by anything else except the lie of the Adversary. . . . Man perishes like a beast. The soul that sinneth, it shall die.

Accompanying these assertions is a cartoon of a Christian funeral in which the minister, a cadaverous chap himself, is seen presiding over the coffin. From his lips come these words: "Our friend is not dead. His soul is hovering near." On the other side are the words; "Satan's lie." The apparent practice of communicating with spirits Judge Rutherford explains in this wise: Satan has seduced some of the angels, causing them to become demons, and they are the ones that now misrepresent the dead.

Since man perishes like a beast, I was moved to find this reference to the death of Pastor Russell:

> We rejoice to know that instead of sleeping in death, as the saints of old he is numbered among those whose "works follow him." He has met the dear Lord in the air, whom he so loved as to lay down his life faithfully in his service.

At first blush this is difficult to interpret. . . . On second, it is easy. The truth is that the Lord returned invisibly in 1914, according to Russell's own calculations, and he now dwells in the air, where the Pastor went to meet him. In the millennium the Lord and his faithful are to be not only priests but kings.

We are already dwelling in the first stages of the millennium, for the downfall of the visible world—that is to say, its principalities and governments and churches—was scheduled for 1914. The delay has been more or less

embarrassing to the followers of Russell, who have graciously moved up the event several times and have at last said that the real destruction is yet to come and will not take place until "after 1926." The date was set for 1914 because "certain Scriptures" show the period of God's kingdom being removed to be seven prophetic times of 360 years each, and a total of 2520 years. As God removed King Zedkiah, last of the kings of the Jews, in 606 B.C., then 1914 is the year. This explanation was made toward the close of that year, when the outbreak of the War in Europe happily gave credence to the Pastor's prophecies.

In the *Watch Tower* of January 1, 1924, we read: "We might expect the harvest to end fifty years after 1874 or with the end of 1924." Or, it adds, fifty years after 1878, or in 1928. Other clever exegeses have been attempted, for in 1927 we find the *Watch Tower* saying:

> Ezekiel's dumbness for a year, 5 months and 26 days might be a time feature to be fulfilled in the dumbness of Pastor Russell in death. It is only reasonable to make this application, because the Prophet in so many respects pictures God's messenger to the closing age of the Church. Pastor Russell died October 31, 1916, and the period indicated will end April 27, 1918.

But the end is not yet. This constipation of epochs grows serious at times, but it never discourages the apostles of the Pastor. They are too profoundly convinced of rampant sin, of its origin with a Devil more personal than Kaiser Wilhelm, and of God's thorough intention to abolish evil and the clergy from the face of the earth. The scheme of it all is really too magnificent to be upset by paltry details, and I am impelled to set it forth at some deserving length. For this portrayal I have followed the utterances of Judge Rutherford, who has kindly brought the whole eschatology of the order up to date in his book *Deliverance,* 1,405,000 copies of which have been distributed. My indebtedness to him I acknowledge only too gladly. Rutherford, by the way, confines himself to principles and asseverations, sedulously avoiding such treacherous things as dates.

III

In the beginning (long before the beginning spoken of it Genesis), God had two sons. Now these two sons were named Logos and Lucifer. Logos seems to have been favoured a bit from the first, but both sons were really charming lads, being designated in the Scripture as the Morning Stars. It seems, however, that Logos created Lucifer, for, since Logos obviously occupied a "confidential relationship to Jehovah, it would therefore be reasonable that Jehovah would speak with him and consult with him about creation." At any rate the two Sons of God played together in heaven long before God had any idea of creating a world in these parts. At last the decision was made and then the news got abroad, Judge Rutherford remarks "the knowledge must have greatly delighted God's heavenly creatures." It will be remembered that "The Morning Stars sang together."

In heaven about this time there was a great multitude of angels. There was, however, "no evidence that any of the heavenly creatures were endowed with power to produce any offspring." For a while everything went well with the new enterprise. Lucifer was made gardener and overlord of Eden and to him was delegated the power of death. But, wretch that he was, he could not stand the strain of responsibility. He forgot God. Selfishness entered his heart and he grew malignant. In his devilish mind he plotted a gigantic scheme of rebellion against the hosts of heaven, reasoning thus: "Adam loves his wife. I will first induce Eve to do my bidding, and then through her I will be able to control Adam. I will make them eat of the tree of knowledge, then of the tree of life and we will all defy God together." [2]

God knew of this deception from the beginning, but he did not interfere. Lucifer went forward with the crime, resorting to "fraud, deception and lying." The lie he told was, "There is no death," and "the emissaries of the evil one have been telling it to the people ever since." It seemed as though the revolt would have

[2] I. F. Rutherford, *Deliverance* (Brooklyn, 1926), p. 26.

been all it had set out to be, had not God suddenly realized the danger. God seemingly acted immediately, before man had an opportunity to get to the tree of life and eat of it, even before Lucifer had time to inform man of the location of the tree.[3] It is well known that the two ate of the tree of knowledge, but "had Adam eaten of the fruit of the tree of life, he could not been put to death even by Jehovah himself, for God cannot be inconsistent." Thus it was that Adam and Eve were forfended in the nick of time and prevented from becoming men like Gods.

The question at once arises, Why did not God kill the naughty Lucifer at the time? The answer is that God wanted intelligent creatures to observe and learn the evil effects of sin. As to the further question, Why did not God kill man forthwith? the Judge replies: "Other scriptures shows that man had not at that time exercised his powers to beget children."[4] Hence he permitted Adam to remain upon the earth 930 years; but the imperfect Adam could not beget perfect children, and the dreadful state of man since his time is directly assignable to him and his sin. "The very first son of Adam was a murderer, and Lucifer the devil induced him to commit the murder. . . . Lucifer is guilty of every murder that has ever been committed on this earth."[5]

Obviously this prodigal Son of God no longer stood in good repute with the Father. In fact, he was disowned, his name changed to Satan, Devil, Serpent, Dragon. "He has been defiant and arrogant and has opposed God ever since the time of Eden. He has slandered God's holy name and has brought reproach upon Him and upon everyone who sought to do the Lord's will."[5]

We must not think that Lucifer's rebellion stopped with Adam and Eve. In the heavens there was a host of angels without convictions whom the wily Lucifer incited to revolt. Between these lewd angels and the children of Adam there took place ghastly acts of wicked-

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 30.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 33.

ness, for the women of earth "were beautiful in form and fair to look upon." Moreover:

> The angels saw that men and women cohabited and that children resulted. It was the will of God that the angels remain upon the spirit plane and should not leave their estate or life upon the spirit plane and mingle with human beings and cohabit with women. But many of the angels, misled and seduced by Satan the Devil, joined the rebellion, as it is written: "And it came to pass that the sons of God saw the daughters of God that they were fair; and they took them wives of all they chose." [6]

It is clear from Gen. 6: 2, 4, 5 that giants, eventuating from these unions, peopled the earth for years and laid terror upon many an ancient countryside. Lucifer reasoned that the angels and the women would breed a race of supermen from whom he could recruit an invincible army.

The fight was on. The mixed breed of angels and giants was wicked beyond description. The offspring of human and angelic beings promised to take the earth by storm unless they were at once deterred. Lucifer was about to induce men to believe that he was rajah of the universe, and quite manifestly, this would never do. Thus the flood. Noah and his family were selected because "they were in no wise contaminated by these materialized angels." Accordingly, he and the godly were set afloat upon the waters and the mongrel race destroyed, though the wicked angels were among those spared. "The record is that they were incarcerated in prison, there to be held until the great judgment day. Jude 6; II Peter 2: 4, 5."

History since the flood has been one unceasing feud between Jehovah God and his arrogant, ingenious son, the Devil. They have lambasted each other like a couple of school boys, Lucifer fighting with rocks and resorting to every means of trickery, Jehovah waiting patiently for His chance to catch His foe out by himself. All the time the people are being tested, and the vast majority of them are being frightfully deceived. For the scheme which Satan has followed for a thousand years

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

or more is this: "To have in his system of government an organized religion by means of which *he could deceive the people and ridicule Jehovah God.*" It appears that all members of the Christian body, save the Russellites, are in the hire of the devil, for "God foreknew that the ecclesiastical systems, Catholic and Protestant, would be overreached by the Devil and used for his purposes."

Then Jesus came. He was merely a man, but a perfect man, the *dopplegänger* of Adam before the Fall. Hence he sufficed as a ransom for all men. This displeased Satan very much indeed. And "since Satan was maliciously bent on killing Christ, God permitted the Devil to show his utter depravity, and at the same time put the test to those who would follow Satan. . . ."

Jesus was intended both as a ransom, whose shed blood should cover every man, and as a Deliverer, who should lead the Race to final glory. But "Jesus could not be a Deliverer if he remained dead. It was necessary then that he be resurrected." Jesus died a man, "But his Father Jehovah raised him out of death a spirit being." Then the Devil tried to prevent the resurrection, and having failed in this he lied about it and has been lying about it ever since.

The scene next turns to Rome, where the Devil built a great Empire, then a still greater Church. "His world power took on Papal Rome, having a visible representation under the name and title of Pope, who claimed to be the representative of the Lord Jesus Christ but who was in fact the representative of the Devil; whether he knew it or not." [7]

It is the same in modern times among the potentates of the Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopalian Churches. All denominations form a hind quarter of the "beast." "The ecclesiastics, to wit: popes, cardinals, bishops, reverends, doctors of divinity, and theological professors," [8] disseminate false teachings, among them "the unscriptural, God-dishonouring doctrine of the trinity." [9]

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 208.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 216.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 214.

Ecclesiastics also teach "the divine right of earthly kings, who are made by big business, to rule the people." With reference to the clergy and the minions thereof, the followers of Russell drew up in 1926 a pronouncement of which the following is an excerpt.

We, the INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS, in convention assembled, declare our unqualified allegiance to Christ, who is now present and setting up his kingdom, and to that kingdom.

. . . . . .

. . . unfaithful preachers have formed themselves into ecclesiastical systems, consisting of councils, synods, presbyteries, associations, etc., and have designated themselves therein as popes, cardinals, bishops, doctors of divinity, pastors, shepherds, reverends, etc., and elected themselves to such offices, which aggregation is therein designated as "the clergy"; and that these have willingly made commercial giants and professional politicians the principal ones of their flocks.

We present and charge that the clergy have yielded to the temptations presented to them by Satan, and contrary to God's word, have joined in his conspiracy, and in furtherance thereof have committed the overt acts as follows, to wit:

Then follow the sins of the clergy; they have "clothed themselves in gaudy apparel, decked themselves with jewels"; they have,

together with their co-conspirators, claimed the ability to set up God's kingdom on earth without God, and have endorsed the League of Nations and declared it to be "the political expression of God's kingdom on earth," thereby breaking their allegiance to the Lord Jesus Christ and declaring their allegiance to the Devil, the god of evil.

Comes next an arraignment of organized Christianity to which "Dick" Sheppard and other members of the unholy alliance would quickly subscribe:

They have advocated and sanctified war, turned their church edifices into recruiting stations, acting as recruiting officers for pay, and preached men into the trenches, there to suffer and die.

It is further alleged that they have "kept the people in ignorance of the Bible," "taught the false doctrine of immortality," and that

They teach the doctrine of eternal torment . . . whereas they know that the Bible teaches that the wages of sin is death, that hell

is a state of death or the tomb; that the dead are unconscious until the resurrection, and that the ransom sacrifice is provided that all in due time may have an opportunity to believe and obey the Lord and live, while the wilfully wicked are to be punished with everlasting destruction.

Things are swiftly passing from bad to worse; the earth is honeycombed with lust and sinfulness; in the offing is the supreme, final battle between Jehovah and that archfiend, the Devil. The ecclesiastical wing of Satan's organization offers the following line-up:

Roman Catholics	273,500,000
Orthodox Catholics	121,801,000
Protestants	170,900,000

In addition there are 1,017,983,000 heathen, "controlled by priests who worship what the apostles plainly say is the Devil." [10] All these elements make the visible part of Lucifer's host assembled for the great Battle of Armageddon.

When we consider that the righteous number scarcely 144,000, we see how greatly the odds favour Lucifer. But let us note further that of the 144,000, "doubtless the major portion of these have already passed into glory." Of those remaining, "it is probable that there are no more than 50,000, maybe less, who are faithfully and joyfully bearing witness to God's holy name." [11]

At last the hour arrives when "God will send forth His beloved Son as Field Marshal." But I defer to the eloquence of Judge Rutherford:

> Suddenly there bursts forth a great flame of light and fire from the right hand of the little company who are singing praises to God. The trumpet are pealing out their terrible strains; the thunders are rolling, the mountains are quaking and trembling, and a voice is calling from the habitation of Zion. It is the God of heaven moving into battle. The great and terrible day of the Lord has come!
>
> . . . . . .
>
> On comes the conquering hero, The word of God, who for centuries has waited for this blessed hour. (Hebrews 10: 12, 13) "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; . . . he was

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 268.
[11] *Ibid.*, p. 272.

clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." (Revelation 19:12, 13). But behold his apparel; it is glorious, even though covered with blood. He is treading out the winepress; he is crushing the wicked vine of the earth. At his approach the mountains tremble and the deep utters its terrible voice and lifts up its hands to the heavens. The sun and the moon stand still in their orbits, and all the stars of the high heaven are shouting VICTORY! With righteous indignation and anger the mighty Conqueror marches through the earth to thresh the nations that have defamed Jehovah's holy name.[12]

And this mighty Conqueror is the lowly Nazarene, now become the deliverer of the righteous. "The saints do not engage in actual combat. This is the fight of God Almighty; and the fight is led by his beloved Son. . . ." [13] When the rest of the slaughter is over, the Lord will seize "the enemy himself, the Dragon, that Old Serpent, the Devil and Satan, and bind him and cast him in the bottomless pit that he may deceive the nations no more." [14] There he stinketh, even after the Millennium is past.

Just what will be the nature of this divine catastrophe, whether fire, earthquake, war, pestilence, the seer never makes quite plain. He scares us into believing, however, that it is to be a synthesis of all. No single calamity would be quite ample for the wrath of God. We may picture "all the disasters that have befallen the race during its existence, all the wars, all the earthquakes, and cyclones and other calamities and know that none of these will equal in woe that which will befall the world during the great Battle of Armageddon." [15] By the side of this great fall, the siege of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. will seem a snow-ball fight between the boys of the East and West sides.

Already the Devil has been pitched headlong from his exalted seat. "With the coming of Christ Jesus into power in 1914 Satan and his demon hosts have been cast out of heaven and onto the earth." [16] The new heaven, prognosticated by Saint John on the Isle of Patmos, is

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 279.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 280.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 280.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 292.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 294.

DANIEL
IN THE LIONS' DEN
Daniel held a high office. He interfered with the system of graft practiced by his under
Counsellors and Captains,--who conspired to have him killed. They influenced the king to decree that whosoever should pray to any God except the King should be cast into the den of lions. Daniel continued to pray to HIS God. The conspirators reported this to the King and induced him to cast Daniel into a den of lions. God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths that they did not hurt Daniel.
The king caused Daniel's accusers to be cast into the den of lions and they were destroyed.
(Daniel 6: 1-24)
"We have not ordained you. You teach not our doctrines."
—CRITICS.
"I stand by Jesus and the Apostles. I stand for whatever the Bible teaches, which is that God is preparing a Church, to be associated with Jesus in His Kingdom; that nobody is to be roasted eternally; that all are to be blessed with an OPPORTUNITY to live forever.
NOT to teach THE FACT SHOULD BE MADE KNOWN and the foul stain dishonoring God's holy Name removed"--Pastor Russell
PASTOR RUSSELL
IN THE CRITICS' DEN

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Daniel and His Modern Counterpart

already an established fact, though as yet invisible. Christ Jesus is in the control of that heaven, busily engaged in working out a staff for the conduct of his kingdom when it comes. He personally will merely direct and will never be seen by mortal eye again. He will, however, have visible representatives. And where will he get them? They will be resurrected from the grave. Throughout the ages God has been selecting them. These men have been kept by the Lord in the pink of condition and will take charge of the new government when it is formed. The names of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Joseph, David, Samuel, and others cited by the Apostle Paul in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews are the nucleus of the council of the New Jerusalem. These ancient worthies will "be brought forth from the tomb as perfect men, possessing perfect bodies and perfect minds" to supervise and overlord the final resurrection of the dead and the restoration of humanity to its divine estate.

This period of restoration will embrace a period of one thousand years. As for the order of judgment, Judge Rutherford says: "It is reasonable to conclude that the Lord will straighten out those who are on earth before bringing back more with whom to be dealt." [17] The 1,748,000,000 now here—no allowances are made in this figure for casualties in the great battle of the Lord—will be the first ones to receive a fair trial. As these begin to be restored, they "will think of their beloved dead and wish they might be brought back to life." This will mark the beginning of the endless procession from the tomb. When will the awakening of the dead begin? "The Scriptures do not disclose the day, but indicate that it will not be a great while after the living have had an opportunity to be reconstructed." [18]

During this blessed hour of resurrection, "Satan will be incarcerated in prison so that he cannot deceive any one. (Revelation 20: 1–3)." Then, at the end of the Millennium, the Scriptures show that he will be loosed and

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 327.
[18] *Ibid.*, p. 327.

given another chance to spread wickedness by crafty methods. "All who then follow Satan will be everlastingly destroyed, and the Devil himself shall then be destroyed. The Devil's system and all his works will be for ever a stench in the nostrils of the righteous people who survive." [19]

It need hardly be said that blessings untold will follow hard upon the destruction of the Devil. He has caused all blindness, poverty, disease, and unhappiness. When he is gone the earth will blossom like the forsythia bush. The Milky Way will be good to drink and Lyrus will broadcast at eventide. The lowest oaf of the Thirtieth Century, if only he be righteous—and with the devil chained the chances should be good—will enjoy luxuries that none but the wicked and God enjoy today.

IV

That, in brief, is the eschatology that has captured the minds of Russell's followers. I have quoted extensively because I felt that no one would believe me if I put the doctrines in my own words, and I have served the whole of it in narrative form because it offers the movement's psychology in its raw, unseasoned state. We have seen that only a "remnant" of the righteous is to be present on the earth as the Lord Jehovah God advances on the enemy. This remnant—fifty thousand or thereabouts—is, strangely enough, the same in number as the present list of subscribers to *The Watch Tower and Witness of Christ's Presence*. It takes no inner light to see that the followers of Russell are the Lord's anointed. There are more points of similarity between Russellism and early Christianity than any churchman would care to admit. There is in it a striking reversion to type. Here in modern times is a religion which expresses, flagrantly and belligerently, a dreadful sense of mass inferiority. It has in it all the elements which make for a thriving religion —notable among them being the promise of exaltation and triumph and prosperity, through faith in canonical

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 340.

promises. It offers folk of low estate a right to become in an obvious and spectacular manner sharers with God of something tangible. In brief, it presents a spiritual means to material ends. The Millennium of Pastor Russell is not the ethereal Devachan of Theosophy, nor the hampered human divinity of the New Thought. It is a banquet of the gods in which Lazarus and his fellow beggars participate, having first cast their oppressors into bottomless torment. Under the regime of Pastor Russell's Christ, the folk of the Mowata, Oklahoma, Ecclesia will be taken to the bosom of Father Abraham and the men who now hold mortgages on their scrawny farms will be carrying slop to the imprisoned Lucifer.

There is something fearful and a little saddening about it all. Here are farmers, barbers, grocers, eking out an unwelcome life in sordid circumstances. Through correct belief in the words of Holy Writ, as interpreted by their leader, they have become the sons and daughters of God awaiting the return of the conquering angel and the establishment of themselves in high places. It is an old story. They expect their irrelevant virtues to qualify them for cosmic triumphs. They are to sit in the seats of the mighty. What, then, does it matter if men now revile and persecute them?

In the terrifying description which Judge Rutherford gives of Armageddon the apparent insignificance of the Army of the Lord is graphically played up. The pastors and their flocks are shown arrayed upon one side of the field, pointing with scorn and contempt at the little band which prophesies the incoming of the Lord. The visible odds are several thousand to one against the faithful and uncompromising few. So arrogant and excessive are the boasts made by the battalions of Satan that all but the very elect of God are hoodwinked into believing that the pastors and ecclesiastics and professors of theology will win. But we have already seen how decisive will be the triumph of the chosen ones, for though they are few in number and puny in battle strength, it is God who fights for them and when the Wicked One has been entirely routed, it is they—the insignificant band

—who will be the masters of the earth and their present superiors will be trodden under foot.

Meanwhile persecution abounds. The doctrines of Russell, the treatment he received, and the contempt in which his disciples are now held, have all fed the intense paranoia which has been the unfailing mark of the movement from its origin. Orthodox churchmen have fallen upon it tooth and nail, and every gash upon its body has been taken as the fulfilment of divine prophesy. It has regarded persecution as the hallmark of its faith, the inevitable result of its devotion to the true precepts of the Almighty. Hence, where it has not received mistreatment, it has imagined it. For Americans haven't time to be for ever burning martyrs.

There are, to be sure, plenty of cases of actual persecution to feed the mills of the Russellite press. The titles of books which have been written in opposition to its teachings indicate the attitude of its antagonists. The Reverend I. M. Haldeman, famous Baptist fundamentalist and millennialist, issued in England a work entitled, *Millennial Dawnism, The Blasphemous Religion Which Teaches the Annihilation of Jesus Christ.* Another has called his discussion *Truth Triumphant or Falsehood Stripped of Its Mask.* This author concludes one of his arguments with this petition: "Having shown clearly the ridiculous nature of Pastor Russell's explanation, I close by asking God to have mercy on his soul, for Christ's sake, Amen."

Everywhere the pastor went, he met with stares and ridicule. As a lad I remember when he came near our town, and the saints of the community would have none of him. I inquired the reason in my boyish innocence, but I never got any satisfaction; I could not help feeling curious about any man who was so despised. In one town in Missouri the village pastors assembled, framed with the light company and sought to prevent the showing of his "Photo Drama of Creation." His works have been burned throughout the land of the free, photographs of the charred remains of some salvaged ones from Tampa, Florida; Rock Island, Illinois; Winston

Salem, North Carolina; Altoona and Scranton, Pennsylvania, being proudly exhibited at headquarters. In June, 1914, his disciples were routed by the police when they sought to distribute pamphlets among those attending sunrise prayer meeting at the famous evangelistic camp at Ocean Grove, New Jersey.[20] And, of course, with their disregard for the existing governmental systems of man, no end of Russellites got into hot water as pacifists during the late war for democracy.

As I have said, where no actual persecution exists, it has been imagined. And where it has been actual it has also been imaginary. Russell has been martyred. That is as obvious as it was necessary. His friends say he was sneeringly referred to as a haberdasher because in his early days he owned a chain of stores. Yet I can't see that this damns the man; any one who calls his brother a haberdasher is either a technician or weak on epithets. The term isn't complimentary, but I don't see that it really crucifies one.

In the literature which the cult circulates is to be found one amazing cartoon which symbolizes the whole martyr psychology of Russellism. It comprises a double-page spread. On one side is the familiar picture of Daniel in the Lion's Den. On the other, following the general scheme in its entirety, is the picture of Pastor Russell in the Scholar's Den. He is shown standing unmoved in the centre of a library room. Rows of books are arrayed about the wall as though they were cruel people looking down into an arena. On the floor on all sides of the stern and unmoved figure of the Pastor are long-haired scholars, shaking their shaggy manes as though they would like nothing better than to devour the intrepid prophet in their midst. Yet he has them hoodooed. Not a hair upon his head is touched and they growl in vain who seek to disconcert him.

In his pamphlet, *A Great Battle in the Ecclesiastical Heavens,* the author depicts a monstrous coalition, comprising the best minds of the Devil's camp, scheming

[20] Precisely the same occurrence took place at the same gathering in June, 1928.

incessantly and staying awake nights to think of means whereby Pastor Russell can be put out of the way. "Protestants, Catholics, every minister in the world has lined up against this One Man, as the Pharisees of Old. . . . This One Man has turned the light upon them, exposing them to the gaze of the people . . . The Unholy Alliance is straining every nerve and sinew to destroy this One Man, his influence and his work. . . . It is Papal Rome and her mongrel progeny against One Man. . . . The fight against Martin Luther means a pigmy compared with this one." And the Judge adds that, as in the case of John Wesley, the wife of this One Man has joined his persecutors.

Russellism is the religion of the consciously second-rate. Despite all its economical printing and the efforts of its enterprising founder, it would never have gained so strong a hold had it not been for the underdog's superb sympathy with himself. I am sure that the orthodox hold Russell in no great esteem, but I am equally sure that they do not spend their time plotting against his followers. S. Parkes Cadman and the other enemies of righteousness never think of Russellism until someone writes a piece about the movement, and then the feeling must be a mélange of curiosity and pity, with little room left for the more violent emotions of the heart. Its errors are, from the point of view of orthodoxy, dangerous indeed. But then these selfsame errors have brought to its disciples a feeling of importance and security, and that after all is exactly what every good-sized heresy, including Christianity, has done.

V

BUCHMANISM

I

Almost in secret, a strange work has been going on for the last two or three years among the undergraduates of many universities, not only here in England but all over the world. This work, of which the general public knows nothing at all, and of which the religious authorities so far as I can gather have never heard, is the activity of a single person.

THESE lines were written by the learned Harold Begbie in 1922. Meanwhile the general public still knows nothing of the movement, but the religious authorities have become acutely aware of it. President Hibben, after due executive investigation, has issued a bull expelling it from the sacred halls of Princeton, the staid Episcopalians have discovered the cassocks of their own clergymen to be infested with the plague, and one large American community has felt the blight of its enthusiasm. The thing is no longer secret, nor is it the work of a single man. The labours so quietly begun by the unobtrusive Buchman, a man "who shuns publicity of any kind" and "nurses the shadows of privacy," has turned into a craze of Holy Ghost evangelism which preys, not upon the ghastly derelicts of Water Street but upon the flowering youth of Cambridge and fair Harvard. It threatened to make a Pentecost of Princeton; it has converted Nicodemus and the Rich Young Ruler, the Rugger Blue and the Phi Beta Kappa.

Apart from the high astounding fact that Buchmanism is religion with a sex appeal, the most notable feature of it is this respectable grade of convert it attracts and the plush environment under which it works. Beg-

bie says of Buchman, "I found that he was able to do, quite quietly, rationally and unconventionally, a work among the educated and refined which hitherto I had chiefly associated with a more exciting propaganda directed to the broken earthware of our discordant civilizations." [1] The Reverend Samuel Shoemaker, rector of the eminently respectable Calvary Episcopal Church, New York, and confidant of Queen Marie, is himself a confessed and ardent champion of the Buchman cause, which, he says, "does for educated people what the Salvation Army does for the down-and-out." In his recent book, *Children of the Second Birth,* he cites sixteen instances of genuine conversion, among bankers and sellers of purple. It is his zeal which is today carrying the methods of Buchman into still higher realms of society. In its original form and as far as we are concerned with it, Buchmanism has to do with colleges, and its phenomena with the secret sins of undergraduates and seminarians.

It is to Harold Begbie that we are indebted for what little information we have of Frank N. D. Buchman. Begbie is an Englishman who has spent a part of his life being "A Gentleman with a Duster" and the rest of it telling yarns about men and women who were coverted from the pleasures of sin to the graces of Christian living. His books are well known—*Twice Born Men, More Twice Born Men,* and *Life Changers.* This last book is devoted entirely to the story of Buchman and the extraordinary cases of his university converts. The name of Buchman is not mentioned in the book, for, as I have said, Buchman shuns publicity. Only the initials, F. B. appear to betray the identity of the man. In the course of Begbie's observations of how men are saved, he heard of the work which Buchman did. They struck up a correspondence and in the early part of 1922 Begbie accepted Buchman's invitation to meet a number of University men "from both sides of the Atlantic" who were to gather

[1] Harold Begbie, *Life Changers—Narratives of A Recent Movement in the Spirit of Personal Religion* (London, 1923), pp. 11–12. This book was published in America under the title, *More Twice Born Men.*

at one of the now-famous Buchman house parties. At this house party were present the flower of the manhood of the English-speaking world, "representative of the best hope we possess of weathering the storm of materialism which so palpably threatens to overwhelm the ship which carries the spiritual fortunes of humanity." But even so, Begbie was not favourably impressed with Buchman's methods. The fellow irritated him and seemed thoroughly unimpressive. Time went on and adjustments began to be made. Buchman worked quietly, never openly prying but always seeking to draw the men out. He has that happy, expectant attitude of regarding every man as a sinner and potential convert. In his handbook, *Soul Surgery,* he warns his followers to beware lest any man be a wolf in sheep's clothing:

> Take nothing for granted. No matter how respectable a man may seem, be he clergyman, or vestryman, or Y.M.C.A. secretary, he may still stand in need of your moral surgery.

It so happened, as might well be expected, that at this very party there was a young British Army officer, "who carried about with him, behind a charming social appearance, a soul that was haunted by the torture of a very horrible sin." Not until the last night of the party did Buchman spot this man and call him in for a conference. That conference lasted until two o'clock in the morning, but when the young officer came down to breakfast, a change had overtaken him. He explained that a great load had been lifted and that he now had a definite work to perform; for Buchman told the fellow that he must go across the ocean, get a young boy whom he had started wrong, "bring him back to England and watch over him, and never leave him till his soul is right."

So favourably was Begbie impressed by then that he asked Buchman's permission to write a book about him. To this the surgeon of souls reluctantly consented, but only upon the condition that his name not be mentioned. Hence the book tells everything except the name, and we must rely upon the initials "F. B." and no end of internal evidence to indicate that its hero is Buchman.

His life story is almost totally devoid of interest, save to the psychologist. When he was graduated from theological school he deliberately sought out one of the most unpromising corners of Gomorrah to begin his labours—and all for the reason that a fellow student in the seminary had accused him of being ambitious. This he disproved to some satisfaction, but though he did a rather creditable statistical work, he was never happy. He was conscious of something in himself which "prevented his message from 'getting through.' " In hope of surcease, he spent one year as a missionary in the Near East, and in 1908 he paid a visit to England for the purpose of attending a religious gathering at Keswick. Here the miracle of his own conversion happened.

He entered one day a little church in Cumberland, where seventeen people were gathered for service. A woman conducted the service. She spoke on the Cross, and though Buchman confesses that he cannot remember what she said, he was aware that she "personalised the Cross." And Begbie reports that

> while he brooded on this idea in a reverie of mind, there came to him, very palpably and with a most poignant realism, albeit with no suddenness, no dramatic intensity, a vision of the Crucified. He was conscious at once of two shuddering realizations—one the realization of a great abyss between him and the suffering Christ and the realization of an infinite sorrow in the face of his Master.[2]

He experienced a "vibrant feeling up and down the spine" as though some great store of life had suddenly been emptied into him. Prior to this moment he had been harbouring grudges against certain religious people; these grudges were in his mind, fermenting, as he puts it. Moreover, there were three sins in his heart, which he lists under the rather general headings of selfishness, pride, and ill will. These he dispelled immediately upon his conversion, despatching letters of confession to six ministers in America, against whom he held a grudge, and in each case asking for forgiveness. From these brethren he never received a reply.

[2] Begbie, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

Though he was ordained into the Lutheran ministry at the age of twenty-four, the years since his conversion have been spent as a sort of gypsy evangelist among the savants, going back and forth between England and America and working among the college students in China, Japan, and Eastern points. He began his work when two Anglican bishops felt the need of having him call upon their wayward sons at Cambridge. There he found distressing conditions—as indeed he has in every college since—and he began his conversational work. In the universities of both England and America he carried on this labour quietly, until the trouble at Cambridge and later at Princeton brought upon him the wrath of the Sanhedrin.

In appearance and demeanour, Buchman has been variously described. Impressions of him vary with every chronicler. The testimonials of his followers indicate that he is not particularly well liked, even by those who worship him. Begbie explains that the men stuck to Buchman as they would to a miracle worker, "in spite of everything that troubled either their taste or their judgment." Newspaper men tell us that he is a "precisely dressed man of medium height, with sharp, searching eyes that peer through gold-rimmed spectacles," and that "one is conscious of a strong psychological insight in the tenor of his remarks." An intimate writes that:

> In appearance he is a youngish-looking man of middle life, tall, upright, stoutish, clean shaven, spectacled, with that mien of scrupulous, shampooed, and almost medical cleanness, or freshness, which is so characteristic of the hygienic American. [3]

He seems constantly to exhale "the spirit of contagious well-being." Another initiate tells us in a rather round about way that he is corpulent and affable: "I am tempted to think that if Mr. Pickwick had given birth to a son, and that son had emigrated in boyhood to America, he would have been not unlike this amiable and friendly surgeon of souls." Still another young Englishman records: "'A horrid, bumptious American' was my comment

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 34.

as he came into the room." And most of his followers are by turns "surprised, admiring, disappointed, enthusiastic, disgusted, afraid or scornful of this apparently commonplace American." It is pretty well agreed that "the impressive thing in F. B. is that a man so unimpressive can work miracles." And the impressive thing is that a horrid, bumptious American has so completely captured the hearts of the flower of manhood in the British Isles. This seems to me far greater evidence of his supernatural power than any spiritual operation he may have performed on a lecherous Sophomore.

One thing we know for certain: Buchman is a modern mystic. More than that, he dwells in such proximity to divine mysteries that his actions "might even suggest surrender to superstition." It is his unfailing habit to awake very early from sleep and devote an hour each morning to "complete silence of soul and body." In this silence, Begbie tells us, "he is listening to the voice from heaven, and the voice comes to him and he receives his orders for the day—he is to write one man, he is to call upon another, and so on." [4] There are many instances given in the recital of his feats to show this quick responsiveness to the Divine Command. One evening he was on the way to see a man in need. Suddenly he felt himself sharply arrested on the way, the hand of his Maker was laid upon his shoulder, and he was told emphatically to return to his room. He obeyed and returning found another young fellow who stood in even greater need of his surgery. At times he would be directed by the Lord to go one way from one point to another, and along the path the Lord mapped out, there he would find someone who needed him. He is, in brief, a sort of yogi hampered by a physical body.

He believes, too, that a blessing can be derived from the reading of the Bible, and that prayer, even for material help, is constantly answered. His habits follow, from almost every point of view and with the exception of his penchant for mystical guidance, the habits of a normal presiding elder or consecrated Baptist profes-

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 35.

sor. He hates sin as venomously as any Southern evangelist, and in his own singular way, he attacks it more ferociously. It would seem, on the surface, as if he was a regular model of the classical Christian virtues.

II

Why is it, then, that his name is anathema and his followers are pariahs? Why should the clergymen of the Episcopal Church in New York express alarm that Buchmanism might become a powerful and dangerous cult within their own communion? Why should Buchman be denied the right ever to speak at Princeton, and why should President Hibben say, "As long as I am president of the University (and I think I speak for the whole administration), there is no place for Buchmanism in Princeton"? What is there about this apparently commonplace American and his principles of personal evangelism to stir up an ecumenical rumpus?

At least part of the answer lies in the direction of certain house parties and the odours of scandal which they have exuded. These parties form the holy of holies of the cult of Buchmanism. And Buchman, shampooed and ordinary as he may be, is the priest who presides upon the sacred mysteries. The term "house party" has of course always conveyed to the American mind thoughts of adultery and godlessness, of furtive sin in all its horror. Hence to use it in connexion with religion service is to offer the public more of an opportunity than it ever needs. During the fall of 1926 a crowd of seventy heaven-bent college men and women fell upon the town of Waterbury, Massachusetts and sought by expert organization and the aid of the Holy Ghost to convert that licentious place to the service of the Lord. Prior to this devastating campaign, the details of which I shall reserve until later, the seventy student missionaries (fifty-five university boys and fifteen college girls) went into a retreat at Camp Hazen, where, under the leadership of the Reverend Samuel Shoemaker, they sought to "get right" before the work began. Before this retreat,

the college folk had proposed taking a crowd of young men and women from the various churches on a house party over Labor Day, but the suggestion somehow proved unpopular with the Waterbury ministry. At the official retreat, however, the sports which commonly enliven a Buchman house party were enjoyed by all. A young man from Princeton is said to have gotten up and to have told of his past life and of how he made a complete surrender. Then, according to the Reverend Stanley D. Crossland, assistant pastor of the First Methodist Church of Waterbury, who was present:

> A young girl told how her life had been changed in a Buchman house party. She told how she had gone to a house party and was indifferent to their talk about guidance and took occasion to object to a married woman who quite frankly told of some relation she had had with her husband. She then told how "they got her" and the woman told many had been led to God by relating the seemingly disagreeable story.

Next a young Southerner arose to speak. "I do not want to say this but I am led to say it," he began, then proceeded to confess his past in that lurid detail which lends such pleasurable excitement to the labours which the followers of Buchman perform for the Kingdom of the Christ.

So it goes. And it all goes back to the methods Buchman uses, for it is these which in turn give rise to the charge that his house parties are orgiastic festivals of saintly undergraduates, who, in the ecstasy of rehearsing their sins, are guilty of intellectual fornication. For the chief feature of Buchman's method is its insistence upon a complete confession of sin, and the sin in most cases turns out to be an error of one sort or another in the matter of sex. As set forth in the movement's handbook, *Soul Surgery,* the key words of the cult are *Woo, Win, Warn,* but as elaborated in that same document, they are Confidence, Confession, Conviction, Conversion, Conservation. It is with the first three of the sacred formulae that both followers and observers are most concerned.

Of his work in saving souls, Begbie says: "His genius, I think, lies in thinking with intense preoccupation of individual persons." That is hardly all, but it is the be-

ginning. Before he does anything else, Buchman explores the crevices of individual consciousness. That is what is implied by the first principle—Confidence. Story upon story is told by his converts, in which they describe the strange desire they experienced in his presence—a desire to tell everything ugly and base about themselves. One man, a Rugger Blue, had gone from bad to worse until he met F. B. At first he did not like the man, but later began to be reconciled. They were scarcely acquainted when one evening F. B. "came bounding into the room," with the simple excuse, "I knew someone was needing me." The men began to talk. The room was filled with the soft light of the setting sun. As they sat there the Rugger Blue thought:

> I sat looking at the cross against the sky, wondering how the devil I was to tell this man, whom I scarcely knew, things about myself which sickened me, disgraced me in my own eyes. Before I quite knew what I was doing I said to him, "Well, I might as well tell you all about it." He said, "Go on" and waited for me to continue. I knew then, absolutely, and with a regular blaze of certainty, that he could clean me out. I told him the whole trouble, everything. I had discussed this thing often enough but I had never before confessed it.[5]

As he confessed his sins, they departed from him. They came out and "in coming out seemed to stay out." He felt the first relief in years. Ordinary methods of self-reform had been of no avail: "I'd tried athletics, I had gone in for all sorts of exercises, cold baths, and tricks for strengthening the will, but all in vain." It was the marvelously free and joyous confession in the presence of Buchman which restored his self-respect.

For the most part a young man who goes to F. B. tells him first his theological difficulties, which, Mr. Begbie says, F. B. listens to patiently enough. Then he turns to the young man and with keen eye and some severity says to him: "It isn't any intellectual difficulty that is keeping you from God. It is sin. You are a ——." It may be that the wretch is anything from a defiler of virgins to a cigarette fiend, but "In nine cases out of

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

ten the diagnosis is true, for he is now so great a master in what he calls soul-surgery that he knows the facial indication of almost every sin which men think they can keep to themselves." [6] Next Buchman asks the sinner if he is calling upon God with his whole will, and if the boy replies that he is, Buchman explains that "the sufferer is trying to lie to himself, as well as to God, and that it is only disease, this secret sin, which could make him so foolish." From that he proceeds to getting the sin out into the open and showing it to its victim in all its horrors and loathsomeness. Once this is done the knife of the surgeon is ready to descend swiftly into vital places and to loose the incubus from its feeding place. He is stern but kind; he hates sin and loves the sinner.

Other instances of the manner in which he inspires confidence and confession are numerous. The English dolt who thought of him first as "a horrid, bumptious American" had not talked with him thirty minutes until he was laundering his soul before the man. Buchman got up to go, not even having invited confession, but the boy insisted, "I also lie. That is, usually. For instance, what I told you five minutes ago.' 'God told me,' he said." And when it was all over John Bull makes the still further confession, "I had told him things that I never breathed to another." [7] Still another man felt, that he could speak with "complete frankness and confidence to this stranger," though his whole previous life had been sadly tortured by the thorn of lust in his side and he really saw no way he could rid himself of it.

Much of Buchman's busy life, so Begbie says, is spent in really converting religious teachers and Christian workers, and he has no end of grateful followers among them. There are in every university young fellows freshly weaned from the paps of sobriety who really don't know what to make of their opportunities. They come, as a general rule, from homes where the defloration of womanhood is regarded as the Swedenborgian sin against the Holy Ghost, and they have never been quite free

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 18.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

from the restraints of religion until they are bundled off to college. College to most of these young men represents the first unhampered chance to sin, yet all the time there hangs over their head the dire prospect of a sulphurous eternity or the contraction of some of the diseases the folks back home have warned them about. Restrained by personal fear from overt acts of vice, they introvert and have their own private adulteries without the aid of accomplices. Most of these fellows turn in desperation to some old head on the campus who seems pure, or more important still, who seems to have weathered the gale of adolescence without going insane as a result of his secret sins. They fall a ready prey to any man or system which promises them deliverance from the grip of their lecherous thoughts and libido. They are not the men who carouse like pirates with the wanton coeds of the campus or get sent home for obstreperous conduct during the Junior prom. They are rather the seminarians, the volunteers for Christian service, the consecrated chaps who think that if there is any greater sin than sex it is deception. Reared to believe in the strictest identity between religion and asceticism, they suddenly find themselves sorely tempted to partake of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Yet they are thwarted by the very positions they occupy and the consequence, as I have said, is that they spend half of their time turning their minds into softly lighted brothels and the other half seeking some surcease from their torture. It is upon this group that Buchmanism feeds, and for their particular needs its methods of procedure seem rather well adapted.

I think one story of a Buchman convert will make rather clear my explanation of this curious recrudescence of emotional, old-fashioned religion in the seats of the higher learning both here and in the Motherland.

There was once upon a time a young man who had little in common with his father but liked his mother well. He was one of three children and spent his boyhood in a small American town where vice never reared its ugly head and where excitement consisted in the

triennial visit of a dog and pony show. He grew to young manhood on the milk of the Word and finally went to Yale. There his troubles began. New Haven, he tells us, is a monstrously wicked city and Chapel Street is the parade ground of harlots and "adventure girls." These haunted their wares each evening in the faces of undergraduates, and what with the glare of lights and the merrymaking of the godless throng, it was almost more than he could bear. But he tells us that he somehow made it, though not without occasional compromise in the form of wicked thoughts. Later he went to India, "but did nothing to stop the appalling vice there." Upon his return to America he decided to teach in the Hartford Theological Seminary at Hartford, Connecticut. "Now no one," he says, "is so unhappy as a theological student." They, too, have come from rural places and they too, must conform to standards set by their profession. Yet they are assailed by temptations "which make them ashamed." The atmosphere of Hartford, and indeed of all theological seminaries, is never really salubrious: "One feels that these places are full of unuttered sin. There is something furtive about them. You don't get public drunkenness, immorality, gambling. There is no visible and healthy clash of good and evil." The whole air hangs heavy with repression and breathing and serenity are difficult. As for the professors, there can be little help from them, for "their only experience of religion is a memory."

One of our hero's fellow-students had once been a miner and a sailor. He used to write sermons for all the boys, for he had an easy flow of language and his homiletic skill gave just the proper twist to scripture. One day he said to our hero: "Shall I tell you what I am? I'm a damned hypocrite. I've been twice with women lately," and Begbie tells us that P. G., as he is called in the narrative, "had the terror always before his eyes that he, too, might fall. One night in New York he had to rush into the streets and walk as hard as he could for miles, fearing that the temptation would beat him. He says, 'I was a divided personality. There were two of me; no unity.

I felt that I might fall; yet I felt that nothing on earth should make me.' "

He was in this state of mind when F. N. D. Buchman came to Hartford as Extension Lecturer on the subject, "How To Deal with Other Men; How to Get into Their Lives." P. G.'s feeling was precisely what the feeling of so many others had been, that here was the fellow to whom he could tell his exciting all. He made full and frank confession, whereupon he saw the light and the shackle of garters dropped at once from his spirit. Later Buchman asked him to go with him to China, and P. G. consented, though he first went to a fellow seminarian and confessed his secret sin—impurity. This fellow seminarian came to life and confessed his own secret sin to P. G. It was only then that full relief came to P. G. He says, "I came to myself in confessing to another man; . . . until a man confesses his sin to another man he can never be really spiritually vital." So he went to China with his saviour, and there, so he tells us, he continued his good ministry of confession and, at the time of the last report, bade fair to live happily ever afterward.[8]

III

The zeal with which collegians spread the good news of emancipation from sin could well be imagined, if to imagine it were necessary. Conservation will be remembered as the fifth cog of the Buchman machine, and conservation means going about doing good, which is to say, going about looking for the sin that lurks beneath the brow of an apparently high-minded medical student or engineer. Here Buchmanism begins to get obstreperous and to run counter to the staid ideas of Episcopalians and college authorities. Being a religion whose instruments are confidence and confession, it proceeds at once to assign divine power to these instruments and to insist upon the observance of its peculiar rites quite as urgently as the Campbellites insist upon immersion or the Holy Rollers upon the second blessing of the Holy Ghost. It

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 105–119.

perpetuates its methods by requiring that they be observed as rites within the temple. The handbook which I have referred to before has this advice to offer:

> When he is certain that the need for confession exists, the soul surgeon must be lovingly relentless in insisting that the confession be made, and when and where it is needed. It is often the kind of drastic, spiritual operation which alone can prevent a superficial repentance and unreal conversion.

It is because each Buchmanite comes to regard himself, after initiation into the mysteries, as himself a soul surgeon of no mean parts and because he grows "lovingly relentless" that confession has played so large a part in the sessions of the cult. I say cult because Buchmanism makes use of certain properties and instrumentalities. To these it attributes miraculous and demonstrable potency. It is distinguished from everyday evangelism by sacerdotal methods singularly its own. Hence confession is not an incident but a sacrament. Says the handbook:

> At the final delegation meeting of his university, each man around the large circle rose and told what the conference had meant to him. This man rose, in his turn, and, before the room full of his fellow students, confessed his sin and asked for their prayers that he might be saved and kept from ever again succumbing to its power. It was one of the most morally courageous acts I have ever witnessed, and can hardly have been forgotten by any man there, and it proved to be the beginning of a life of real victory and power for this man, who is today a very successful missionary in a foreign land.

The psychology to the individual is simple enough. He feels the sudden release which comes from the "washout"; and since the thing he washes out is generally regarded as despicable, he feels sharply enough that he will never permit it to enter again. He makes himself, consciously and joyously, the object of social control. Then there follows that feeling of exemplary merit which comes from abnegation of any sort. The Buchman convert thus becomes a monk without a cell; he has nothing to do but to minister to the needs of his fellow man. What we have, then, is a horde of holy men loosed upon the modern world, fired by the zeal of their own experience and the profound conviction that sin is hideous.

Such a horde, as I have intimated, descended upon the unsuspecting town of Waterbury, Massachusetts in the fall of 1926.[9] The four young men who led the campaign were from Yale, Harvard and Princeton—Yale leading with two representatives. Two years before a group of seminarians had been lolling about "in one of the student's rooms in the vine-covered Lawrence Hall of the Episcopal Theological School at Cambridge." They were discussing the lot of the minister and all were agreed that they wanted something more exciting than the ordinary routine of feeding the lambs on the milk of the Word. They had heard of the street preaching of students in England and Scotland, and they decided to go and do likewise. The result was a mild campaign in the city of Fitchburg. With this victory behind them, a similar group proposed another campaign to the ministers of Waterbury. The ministers agreed and raised forty-five hundred dollars for the young evangelists, and all was put in readiness.

The three days immediately before the campaign were given over to spiritual wrestling in the mountains of Massachusetts, where the Reverend Shoemaker refereed the bouts. During this training season Shoemaker told the young men and women just how they were to approach individuals in Waterbury:

> We were not to approach everyone, but just when the "guidance" led us to a certain person. He didn't tell us how the guidance comes except that he got it in prayer. We were to create a confidence and then confess something out of our experience and lead the person to confession of the wrongs in his or her life. The story method was the best. Then we were to create a tension and we were to learn the art of making a person feel uneasy. We were to be willing to rip them up the back, and he said, "I want somebody to rip me up the back." Also such advice as: "Remember, they (the prospects in Waterbury) are interested in us as rotters. They are not interested in saints."

An interesting glossary of terms used among these young revivalists is afforded by Mr. Crossland's report

[9] I am indebted to Ernest W. Mandeville for the facts in this account. His admirable description of the episode appeared in *The Churchman,* October 9 and 23, 1926.

as transmitted by Mr. Mandeville. There must be a "mutual sharing" and a "wash out." Also they must take "time out" for prayer, and return to the fray more determined than ever. "Guidance" referred to the mystical aid of the Holy Ghost and "fresh fish for breakfast" indicated the miraculous way the Lord has of supplying His servants with whatever they chance to need. In most cases this last supply was made to the speakers, who gave no thought to preparation, but waited for the Lord to fill them, which He generally did, but, as some of the infidels testified, with wind.

Here in the mountain fastnesses as later in the heat of battle, the antics of these young folk were precisely those of a band of ignorant mountaineers in the wilds of Kentucky. There was all the stress of the Nineteenth Century revival and all the holy passion of Dayton, Tennessee. A condition bordering upon frenzy prevailed. There were sudden conversions; the daughter of one Episcopalian minister got so gloriously saved that she stood on a soap box each evening and confessed her sins to the populace. Some of the collegiate deaconnesses visited the prostitutes in jail, though no confessions from these sisters of sin were reported. In the final consecration service, where were gathered "those who mean business," most astounding things are reported to have happened. It was another Pentecost. The Reverend Mr. Gallaudet, minister of the Congregational Church, testified that he had actually seen Jesus Christ while motoring on the Bethany, Connecticut road. Mr. Mandeville says: "He was so blinded that he had to stop his car and walk into the woods with our Lord while he wept and wept. He is now and henceforth will be, he says, a changed man."

Mr. Mandeville also tells this one:

> One of the Waterbury flapper converts with whom I talked told of her former dislike for girls and her passion for men. "I used to go out on the wrong kind of parties," she said, "but I was never so happy as I am now. The boys (students) have shown me where I was wrong. Now I know Christ and everything is different!"
>
> "How did the boys know you were doing those things?" I asked.

"—They saw it in my eyes," she replied, "and then —— came to see me often and soon he told me my eyes looked much clearer. I am so happy."

Still another maiden reproached her minister severely for his having failed to point the true path to her, saying that "a stranger had come to town in the form of a young God who has won me for Christ."

IV

It is easy to see how certain differences of opinion might arise concerning Buchmanism. It has always happened just that way. At Cambridge trouble occurred of which the explosion at Princeton was but a reverberation. Buchman has brought disturbance wherever he has gone, and Americans, even more than the sons of dear old England, are excited by a disturbance. One of his most consecrated devotees reports that at Oxford "he sat for two weeks in a room in one of the colleges, and by the end of the stay the college was ranged sharply apart into two camps—the pro- and anti-F. B.'s." [10]

The same affair occurred at Princeton; there the storm centered about the Philadelphian Society, an organization over one hundred years old. It was Shoemaker, a member of the Society, who brought Buchmanism to Princeton, for he returned to the University shortly after the war, fired with Buchman's ideals and convinced that the undergraduates of the University were in sad need of the sex panacea. The idea caught on, chiefly among the Seminoles, as the theological students are called, and from those days until 1924 the spread was epidemical. Buchman himself made only occasional visits of inspection, which was enough to inspire Shoemaker all that was in any way necessary.

What happened at Princeton during those years is now a matter of tradition, and since it has never been completely verified by investigation, is not any more certain than many other events in religious history. The authorities and the older students, however, seem to have

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

regarded the movement with indulgence, feeling that the devotees of the cult were serious-minded young men earnestly bent on doing good and were therefore to be treated with kindness. The Buchmanites became obstreperous at an early stage, however. Their practices were, to a milder degree, those of Waterbury. They would enter a boy's room and insist upon praying for his immortal soul while he insisted upon studying for an examination, for here as at Waterbury they had certain hours when they took a little "time out" for prayer and meditation. There were public confessionals and a few house parties and on the whole the phenomena one would expect when a group of youth goes rampant with a desire to bring salvation to its fellows.

I am told that there was a grave invasion of privacy in these efforts, that some of the Buchmanites were determined to make a spiritual survey of the institution and went so far as to canvas the graduate college on the state of the men's souls therein. The emphasis here, as elsewhere, seems to have been upon the sin of private adultery. One of the members of the movement took the young and rather innocent daughter of a professor to a movie one evening and during the performance did his confessional to her, telling all of the mistakes, crimes, and abuses of his sexual life. The daughter told her father, and of course such incidents did not help the Cause with the administration.

While he was on the campus in 1924, Buchman, in fact, told President Hibben that 85 per cent. of the undergraduates at Princeton were sexually perverted or abusive. He might have put the figure higher on good authority and with perfect safety if he had read Berlanger's *Vorlesunger:* "95 per cent. of young men and women occasionally practise auto-eroticism." But President Hibben did not like the reflection which the figures cast upon the fair name of Princeton, and it was this line from Buchman which prompted his statement about Buchmanism and led to the announcement that Buchman would not be allowed in the future to address the students of the University.

Shortly after the affair at Waterbury the crisis came at Princeton. It was, however, an editorial in *Time,* based on the Mandeville articles, which led to the precipitation. At first the *Princetonian* scorned the threat of malignant Buchmanism at Princeton, but when in October, 1926, an open forum was held in which the Philadelphian Society was discussed pro and con, the *Princetonian* said:

> We feel that a certain form of Buchmanism does exist here (not in connection with the Philadelphian Society as an organization, if you please, but through a part of its personnel). We know that it is not wanted. And we hope to see it driven out.

On the 25th of the same month a signed article appeared in the *Princetonian* asking for the resignation of Ray Purdy and other secretaries of the Society who entertained Buchman on the campus against President Hibben's wishes.

Then it was that a great convocation of students assembled to discuss "The Philadelphian Society and its Relation to Princeton." Under this apparently harmless topic, Buchmanism came in for a drubbing. It was roundly denounced and the collegians agreed that if it was actually on the campus it should be driven off at once. It was called by the speakers a "religious cult which appeals to religion through high emotionalism and emphasizes sex as the greatest sin."

A ballot was taken on the points raised by the discussion and the results showed a heavy margin for the enemy. In response to the question, Do you believe that Buchmanism in any form should be connected with a religious organization in Princeton University? the vote stood: No, 248; Yes, 95. And to the further question, Do you believe that an undesirable Buchmanism is now practised by the Philadelphian Society or any undergraduate organization? the vote stood: Yes, 253; No, 85.

Following this meeting and in response to its voted request, the Society was duly investigated. The committee of investigation properly concluded that they could find nothing definite to report on Buchmanism. An effort was

made to determine whether or not an offensively aggressive form of personal evangelism had been carried on, whether or not the privacy of the individual had been often invaded, whether emphasis had been laid upon a mutual and intimate confession of sins, and whether the employment of these methods had alienated a large part of the undergraduate body from the activities of the society. Nothing definite could be found, for when the young men who had originated charges in general were called before the committee, they offered nothing tangible. The committee did say they thought it was a mistake for Purdy to invite Buchman to Princeton without Hibben's approval and to invite at least two students to meet the soul surgeon without telling them whom they were to meet.

The students were of course disappointed by this mild report. As it now stood the society seemed to be exonerated from Holy Roller tactics. But less than three weeks after the committee had reported that the Society was free from militant evangelism, Ray Foote Purdy, graduate secretary, who will be remembered from Waterbury days, dropped another bomb into the camp by declaring that the aims of the society were identical with those of Buchman. He said:

> For whatever success there has been in Christian evangelism at Princeton, I personally owe more to Frank Buchman than to any other man at present in Christian work, and whatever aims and methods have been used at the Philadelphian Society, have been similar, as far as I know them, to those of Mr. Buchman."

He further expressed the belief that the fight was being waged not against Buchman but against Christianity and that the whole stir was but a part of the conspiracy, of the forces of darkness warring against the hosts of heaven.

This was too much. The administration withdrew its support, and Purdy, together with his associate secretaries—among them Scoville Wishard, who aided in the round-up at Waterbury—were forced to resign. In the Fall of 1927 a Phi Beta Kappa man, an honour student,

and a football star, in the person of Ernest C. Bartell was elected to succeed Purdy and the affairs of the religious body were once more restored to respectability.

The moral of the Princeton fracas, if there is any, seems to me to lie in this direction: The college community despises anything odd. The Buchmanites seem to me no more absurd than the Shakers. They rest their case solidly upon the fact that a vast majority of young men are given to the practice of what evangelists call secret sin. They feed upon the further fact that, for the next twenty years at least, the vast majority of the sinners will be grateful for deliverance from their disgrace and enjoy the disproportioned emphasis upon the sin of sex. They are doubtless pests of the worst order. They resemble, from all I can gather, the ministerial students of a small denominational College, who feel called of God to go about prying into the beliefs and practices of their fellow men. By persecution, however mild it may be, the tenets of the movement are hardened into dogmas and its sentiments into holy ideals, and its leaders are led to believe, as Purdy and Mother Ann believed, that fight against the sect is a fight against God.

Whatever the case may be, we have in Buchmanism a curious spectacle: a body of inspired and zealous young men of more than moderate education going about among their fellows in a campaign of personal righteousness, for the promotion of which they rely upon the methods of the Eighteenth Century and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Apart from the psychology of the phenomenon, it presents all the fascinating anachronism of a Mennonite feet-washing in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

VI

THE DUKHOBORS

I

THOSE who regard the Dukhobors as Russian Quakers know nothing of the Quakers and noticeably less of the Dukhobors. The two sects have in common certain practices, such as a refusal to bear arms and take oaths, but there the similarity stops. The Dukhobortsi are no more like the Quakers in fundamentals than the Bantus are like the Coloured Methodists. For one thing, the Quakers are respectably Christian; the Dukhobors are wholly unchristian and have a private array of Christs all their own. The Quakers accept the Bible as the Word of God; the Dukhobors regard the account of the Virgin Birth as a fairy tale originally told for children, and while they admit that the Old Testament is good in part, they insist that it has a great many foolish things in it. And the Dukhobors, with their refusal to work horses and cows in the labour of the farm, put the Quakers to shame in tender-heartedness—so much so, in fact, that Joseph Elkinton, who has written a history of the Dukhobors from the Quaker point of view, expresses the belief that these peculiar people of the Canadian Northwest are "over-conscientious." This same man, on behalf of the Quakers of America, has spent no little effort in Canada trying to "enlighten the people with the Word of God." But to no avail. The Dukhobors' reply from the Book of Life, are invariably evasive when one attempts to proselytize them, and lead on the whole a life as different from that of a Quaker as the life of Asoka was from that of Calvin Coolidge.

The fact is, when all is said and done, the Dukhobors are not like any other sect on the face of the earth. They

offer fewer chances of obvious comparison and there is always some great difference to mark them off. They have the same abominable habit of the Mennonites in not recording their proceedings and they salute no man by the way. They have refused to answer questions, save in recent years, and their origins are shrouded in mystery and the inner meanings of their doctrines are never made quite clear.

They have a venerable history, peopled with great characters and staunch advocates and martyrs and despots. The story goes, according to A. Maude, who has written about the only authentic book upon them as a whole,[1] that in early times there lived among them in the Ukraine a stranger, by some accounts a non-commissioned officer, who taught them, roving about from house to house. Already the semblance of a sect had been formed, though the earliest origins, as I say, are not easy to determine. The leaders of the sect assert that their teachings are derived from the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, and Aurelio Palmieri, writing in the *Harvard Theological Review* for January, 1915, expresses the belief that these three may symbolize Kuhlman, Nordman, Trevitinov, all early leaders who were burned to death near the close of the Seventeenth Century and the opening of the Eighteenth.

This conjecture is as good as any. Whatever the case, this stranger of whom I have spoken appeared among the Dukhobors of Ukraine, where he founded a nonconformist Russian sect. In his migratory ministry he preached that governments were unnecessary, that all men were equal, that the hierarchy and priesthood were human inventions, and that the Czar and Archbishop were just like common folks. There is, Maude admits, some indication that this anonymous teacher was a Quaker. He presented the doctrines in articulate form which the sect had long ago embraced and about this nameless leader they regathered. Their name, Dukhobors, is simple in origin. Like the terms of so many sects, it was used first in derision. For among the non-

[1] A. Maude, *A Peculiar People, the Dukhobors* (London, 1905).

conformist groups were the Iconobors, who refused to believe in idols, and the Dukhobors, who, according to the judgment of the Greek Orthodox Church, wrestled against the Holy Ghost. The believers among the sect accepted this name readily as expressing their best elements, and transformed it into a compliment, asserting that in fact they wrestled and fought with the Holy Ghost instead of with the Sword.

Their first known leader was one Sylvan Kolesnikov, who hailed, by the way, from the same province as Madame Helen P. Blavatsky. He was a man of distinction among the Dukhobors, for he could read. Moreover, he had prudence and tact. He followed the general philosophy of the cult, teaching that all the externalities of religion were of no importance. He held, along with Pastor Russell one hundred years later, that all men were fallen angels, yet he insisted upon a different emphasis, saying that they had tumbled before the foundation of the world and were really divine inside.

It was Gregory Akovoroda who formulated the Dukhobor confession of faith. Gregory's father wished him to enter holy orders, but the lad had other ideas. After completing his education, he found, however, that pressure would be brought to bear upon him by the Archbishop of Kief, so he hit upon the ruse of losing his wits. He spoke in an altered voice, and stammered. The holy man of Kief let him alone, strangely enough, and the young philosopher later went to Austria, where he met and communed with the scholars of his day. After much travel in European countries, he returned to Russia and adopted the life of a vagabond. "Carrying a Hebrew Bible and a flute, he went from village to village and city to city, giving advice, conversation, and music." He pled always the cause of the humble and the meek. He wore the coarsest clothing and ate the plainest food. Before his days were out, he became a musical composer of some renown. He died in 1794, having made a bit more articulate that vast body of weird ideas which make up the Dukhobor credo.

The solidification progressed further at the hands of

Illarion Pobirohin, an opinionated and eloquent wool-gatherer who loved religious discussions and early in life doubted the words of Holy Writ. He gave the Dukhobors that cardinal tenet to which they have always clung, namely, that truth lies not in books but in the spirit of man, not in the Bible but in the Living Book. Despite his aversion for the authority of the Bible, he lost no time in announcing himself to be the Christ, a fact which did not seem to startle his followers. He established a theocratic despotism, of which he himself was the centre; then he gathered about him twelve apostles and "Twelve Death-Bearing Angels," whose function it was to punish all of those who lapsed into the habits of the world after becoming Dukhobors. He insisted that the Church which he established was infallible and that the Greek Orthodox Church literally reeked with sin. It was he who first assembled the Dukhobors into one community and introduced communism among them. He increased in confidence and self-assurance during his life, and like all outspoken Russians of that day, Christ though he was, landed in Siberia. Meanwhile, under Catherine II and Paul, the sect suffered persecutions at the hands of the local governments of Russia, and became notorious among respectable Russians for its pacifism, its rejection of Church authority and rites, and its disapproval of civil government.

The man who took Pobirohin's place Savely Kapoustin, is said to have been the most remarkable of all Dukhobor leaders. It is further rumoured that he was a son of the Old Man. At least we know that he was at one time in the Russian army and that he returned to take the place left vacant by Pobirohin's banishment to Siberia. He founded a dynasty which still persists upon the plains of Western Canada. It was carried on under the name of Kalmikof, for the shrewd leader of the Dukhobors arranged for the use of this honoured Russian name to escape the detection of the birth of his son.[2] He taught the transmigration of souls and that

[2] See Maude, *op. cit.*, p. 121. "According to the law of the times his son would be liable to serve in the army as he himself had done. Kapoustin, there-

Christ is born again into every soul, that God dwells and reveals himself in every believer. Following this with a long rigmarole of pure reasoning, based upon Christ's statement, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the ends of the earth," and the further assumption that the soul of Jesus must have animated another body, Kapoustin persuaded the people that this same Christ Spirit dwelt among the Dukhobors and was present now in him. He said, "Now, as truly as heaven is above me and the earth under my feet, I am the true Jesus Christ your Lord."

Kapoustin was a man of imposing gait and appearance, amazing memory and remarkable eloquence. It was under his regime that, in 1801, the first movement of the Dukhobors toward Milky Waters, the settlement that they later made famous, began. Upon the assassination of Paul and the ascension of Alexander I, conditions became more favourable to the Dukhobors, and by 1816 there were nine villages of these people at Milky Waters, comprising some fourteen hundred souls—which is to say, males. In all there were about three thousand persons. So remarkably did the Dukhobors get on with their new enterprise that the government was compelled to call a halt in the migrations, for here in the heart of Russia was a conspicuously successful and favoured sectarian movement in open defiance of the Czar, and practising in the early years of the Nineteenth Century what the Bolsheviki instituted, to the immense displeasure of the civilized world, one hundred years later. Kapoustin, like all the other messiahs, had his twelve apostles and his thirty elders who supervised the business of the cult, but always at his direction. Trade and commerce with the outside world were discouraged, says Maude, for they "were likely to engender covetousness or as likely to bring intercourse with the 'Chaldeans,' whose opinions and practices might be harmful to the chosen people."

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fore, made arrangements that the boy should be officially illegitimate. For this purpose he sent his wife back to her own family, the Kalmikofs, before the child was born, and let the boy pass by their name. After this Kapoustin remarried his wife. This explains how it was that the dynasty founded by Kapoustin has borne the family name of Kalmikof."

Thus Kapoustin, the soldier turned messiah, converted this strange anarchistic sect into a closely knit government, a stiff and intractable monarchy with himself as king. He taught his followers not only to refrain from trade and commerce with the Chaldeans, but also to conceal adroitly their beliefs and practices from the outsiders, and never to involve their leader in any difficulty by admitting that he dictated their actions and their policies. The subterfuge used was a clever one, and has, no doubt, given rise to the prevalent idea that these Dukhobors were an innocent and apostolic cult having much in common with the rest of Christendom. For the Bible began to be used as a means of explaining their actions when the need arose. That was a perfectly good and convincing source to quote, and its quotations came as near silencing inquirers as anything else that might be said. They used it then, and they use it to this day, to give reasons for the faith that is in them. But there is no indication that they appealed to it among themselves as the ultimate or even as a minor authority of faith and practice. Its use was only a part of the admirable scheme of deception that they kept up, enabling them to be withdrawn from the world and yet exalted in the eyes of at least the saintly part of the world. It was doubtless this use of the Bible which led both Tolstoy and the English Quakers in later years to lend such willing aid to the pilgrims when they began their hegira across the Atlantic to Canada.

Another device that Kapoustin used was equally clever: the business of the cult was conducted through the Orphans' Home at Milky Waters. The purpose of this home, ostensibly beneficent, was actually to form a central administrative and financial agency for the conduct of the colony's affairs. Through this home all the relations with the Government were transacted, and throughout his regal tenure, Kapoustin was known to the government only as its manager. It was, with appropriate finesse, called Zion, and in its cloisters were virgins constantly trained to sing the hymns of the Dukhobors.

But of course the Dukhobors excited the interest and curiosity of their neighbours, regardless of their use of the Bible and the Orphans' Home. Everyone complained of their shyness and suspicion. They held themselves to be a "holy people, the King's anointed, and without sin." They could read nothing but the Book of Life, yet that was sufficient. And when a representative of the English Bible Society called upon them and offered to distribute the New Testament gratis, they refused, saying that what was in the Bible was in them also. Throughout their curious career, they were visited by those who sought to enlighten them and set them right. A priest of the Greek Orthodox Church was sent to call upon them and administer the holy rites. But, unfortunately, the man of God became drunk the first night in the community--doubtless on bootlegged liquor, for the Dukhobors have always been opposed to spiritous beverages. At any rate, the priest was punished by confinement to a monastery, and for a time the Dukhobors were unmolested by missionaries.

It was only when some of their members were expelled that trouble fell upon them. Too many peasants wanted to join, and the disgruntled saints distributed bad tidings throughout the countryside. This was the call for a renewal of the persecution which periodically falls upon them, even to this day, and the result of it was that another messiah was thrown into prison. After diligent efforts, the Dukhobors got Kapoustin released, and he is declared to have died. Due report was made to the Russian authorities that their leader had passed on and had been securely buried. But the authorities were not convinced. With characteristic thoroughness, they exhumed the body and found it to be that of another man. The corpse had a red beard, whereas Kapoustin was clean-shaven. Maude reports that the leader lived several years after this in one of the villages at Milky Waters.

Alexander I visited the villages in 1818, curious to see what their practices were. He was received simply and treated with the same naïve hospitality which the Dukhobors would have shown a tramp. His whole at-

titude toward them was as beneficent as his dignity and other subjects would allow him to be. But the local government under whose supervision the settlement at Milky Waters fell was not so good. The Kalmikof brothers succeeded Kapoustin, and the trouble with the government began again. These brothers were worthless rulers, having no more authority than the present King of England. The result was that the duties devolved upon the Elders and Apostles, who promptly set up an inquisition, based upon the words, "Whoso denies his God shall perish by the sword." Haxthausen, a German officer who investigated the sect at this time, reports that within a few years some four hundred people had mysteriously disappeared. A thorough probe was begun, with the result that many bodies were found to have been buried alive and many others horribly executed. It was after this series of outrages that the families were moved from Milky Waters to the Caucasus.

There was danger that the line of messiahs would run out with the brothers Kalmikof. But the Dukhobors supplied Illarion with six virgins for purposes of procreation. He left two sons, upon one of whom at the age of thirty the Dukhobors hoped the spirit of Christ would descend like a dove. It did, and Peter Kalmikof enjoyed a brief and earnest reign, telling his people that the Christ spirit would pass from them when he died. But not so. It fell, curiously enough, upon the wife of Peter, Madame Loukeriya, who ruled the Dukhobors for years, and most ably too. Upon her death came Peter Verigin, the present ruler of the sect and the man who has established them with great executive skill on the plains and in the mountains of Western Canada.

Like all his predecessors, Peter was a lineal descendant of the preceding Messiahs. It was, however, not without some effort that he convinced the people of this. It was apparent upon Madame Loukeriya Kalmikof's death that the sect could not be left without a leader, a God-Man in their midst. The belief in the need of such a man was so firmly entrenched in their minds that by 1886 it was possible for Peter Verigin to advance his claims.

The rumour was put into circulation that he was really the son of the late Peter Kalmikof. Indeed he had been seen hanging about Madame Loukeriya throughout the latter part of her reign, and though he had been thought of chiefly as a courtier, it was possible that the Madame had been training him for service.

The movement for Peter spread. He was a handsome, literate, and at that time, unprincipled youth. In the interests of his campaign he went to his native village. There his mother graciously confessed before him and the assembled people that the boy was the son of the King. For Peter Kalmikof had "honoured her by his holy attentions at the time of his last visit." Upon this confession, Mother Verigin and her husband fell at the young man's feet and the people did likewise. Thus did Peter Verigin come to be the leader of the most active and earnest branch of the Dukhobors. He was married at the time, but Maude reports that he paid little attention to his wife in the presence of Madame Loukeriya—that, indeed, the Madame died in an insane rage when she learned that Peter had unwittingly against her will invited his wife to meet him at a sea resort.

II

Here begins the strange chain of events that finally led to the establishment of the Dukhobors in Canada and laid the basis for their amazing capers there. It was not long, of course, before Peter Verigin was sent to Siberia. But he did not lose touch with his subjects. Rather he kept in constant communication with them. Among the young intellectuals of Siberia, Peter met men of many heresies, among them Stundists, Baptists, and Tolstoyans. He came naturally enough under sinister influences there, and though he claims not to have read Tolstoy's works, in one of his epistles he quoted verbatim from Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Within You*. This was in 1896. No acknowledgment was made and Peter's name was signed to the document. It was clear, however, that he had imbibed ideas in Siberia which were to make

articulate once more the whole doctrine of the Dukhobor sect.

It was in 1894–1895 that Tolstoy met three Dukhobors who were on their way to see Peter Verigin in Siberia—against the instructions of the government, of course. Tolstoy, the idealist, immediately thought he had found the Kingdom of God. These were people after his own heart. They worked with their hands, apparently acknowledged no human authority, and produced more than they consumed. Immediately the idealist swore that the thing occurring among them was the "germinating of that seed sown by Christ 1800 years ago: the resurrection of Christ Himself."

From his prison throne, Peter Verigin issued many edicts. He changed the name of the sect to the Christian Community of Universal Brotherhood. He forbade military service of any kind among his followers; and he forbade sexual intercourse and meats. How well these edicts were obeyed, even to the point of abstinence from intercourse, is shown by the fact that there were few young children when the colonists reached Canada. Then, says Maude, "marriage became an epidemic."

The party at home was split by these edicts, as was to be expected. The majority followed Verigin's instructions and became known as the Fasters. These who refused were called the Butchers. Among the Fasters Verigin was regarded with superstitious reverence. Rumours came back from Siberia that Verigin was seated upon a high throne in the North "with a Russian ambassador on his right and a Chinese one on his left."

To the Fasters Verigin sent word that they were to burn their firearms as an outward symbol of their new faith. The Fasters obeyed, withdrew their money from the bank and divided the money, announcing that they were going to leave the country. The tense feeling of a Kentucky revival prevailed among the people. Upon the renunciation of their arms in a dramatic and defiant way, the Cossacks set upon the Dukhorborsti and flogged them brutally. The Governor of Tiflis called upon the colonists, but he was poorly received, and he got no

promise of good behaviour out of them. Accordingly it was decided that the homes of the Fasters should be broken up, and more than four thousand of them were distributed to surrounding provinces.

Through the efforts of Tolstoy, whose novel *Resurrection* is said to have been written to obtain funds for the exodus, the arrangements were made for the Dukhobors to leave Russia. His own efforts were supplemented by those of the English Quakers, and a committee was sent to Canada to prospect for the coming colonists. They were granted permission to leave, with the understanding that they should pay their own fare and that those now conscripted or in prison should work out their terms of service before going.

A. Maude, to whom I have several times alluded, was among those who came first, in the spring of 1898, to reconnoitre for the settlers. The consent of the Canadian government, then on the lookout for colonists, was secured, with the understanding that the Dukhobors were to be exempt from military service. The Government specified, however, that the settlers were to do such simple and civilized things as to supply vital statistics and pay taxes. To such requirement the prospectors gave ready consent, little thinking that these very items should one day become the *casus belli* of that queer and at times laughable struggle which has gone on between the harmless Russian peasants and the government of Canada.

If we overlook the prospecting committee, which was really unrepresentative of the Dukhobors and had little or nothing to do with accomplishing their feat of migration, the Dukhobors executed their exodus from Russia to Canada without a Moses, working it out as best they could, until by the winter of 1899–1900, more than seven thousand of them were settled uncomfortably upon the bleak plains of Saskatchewan. In 1899, two steamers, the *Lake Superior* and the *Lake Huron,* made the trip, and with the second came Count Sergius Tolstoy, second son of the venerable Count.

When the peasants actually arrived their troubles began. The winter was too near to admit of planting a crop,

so that they were scattered and given such romantic tasks as working on the railroads—a job for which they were as well suited as the Shakers would be, let us say, for running a bawdy house. Conditions grew worse, but the perseverance of the saints was great, and by the year 1902 the colonists were established in communities and well along the road toward prosperity and agricultural munificence.

They still lacked a leader, however. The Canadian government arranged for the release of Peter Verigin, and news arrived in the year 1902 of his coming. The whole population was thrown into a high tension; daily the excitement grew, reaching at last almost revival pitch and culminating, as we shall see in a moment, in the famous pilgrimages which brought the Dukhobors into the American limelight and left them there for years. Immediately the Dukhobors dispatched a thousand dollars to five different towns through which Peter Verigin might pass. Everywhere the greatest confusion and most glorious expectation prevailed. Many tramped from village to village, proclaiming that the time of God's beneficence had come. What would have happened if Verigin had accepted the role of Deliverer which the seven thousand Dukhobors assigned him is difficult to say. As it was, on his way from Siberia to Canada, the leader met Tolstoy, and the novelist counselled discretion and moderation, so that Peter's actual arrival was a depressant and not a stimulant.

Meanwhile, however, things began to happen fast. Trouble had already begun to set in with the Canadian government over the refusal to make the proper entry with civil authorities of the births, marriages, and deaths occurring within the communities and the further refusal to make proper land entries with the Department of Interior. Dissatisfaction with the country and its harvests, began to manifest itself. The excitement prevailing and the dissatisfaction which grew daily set the stage perfectly for the fanatical and millennial capers of the more zealous members of the community.

In brief, the hour for a local messiah of any sort was

ripe. And of course he came. He preached that it was wrong to make use of metals taken from the earth by the enslaved brothers of the Dukhobors—humanity in general—and that even pins should not be used among them. He further announced that it was all wrong to train horses and cattle to do the work of man or to yield that delicacy, milk. Moreover, it was wrong to till the soil, for, obviously it spoiled the earth's appearance, and furthermore—and here is a most important item—there were many countries where man can live merely by taking the fruit from the trees. Then, too, the zealot pointed out that Jesus did not work, and that he had cited the lilies of the field as perfect examples of Christian virtue.

Immediately the community was divided into camps. Almost sixteen hundred followed the evangelist, who proclaimed that the time had come for an acceptance of the divine law of life and work. The stay-at-homes were threatened with hell-fire. Families were divided, and the motley band went forth to meet Jesus somewhere in the great Northwest. They hoped not only to meet him but to be led by him to a warm country where they could eat fruit from the trees and be free from the onerous task of conforming to the laws of earthly government. They had to pray hard, says Maude, to avoid the temptation to work, for the habit of earnest toil was deeply ingrained in them. When all was ready, they handed their coin over to the nearest immigration agent, who represented Cæsar. They turned out their cows, and handed their sheep over to God, and to the wolves. They cast aside their leather boots, for were they not the product of animals? The movement grew, gathered force and enthusiasm as it went, and recruited old men, women, and children. Some went bare-headed. All were without food, for the Lord would provide for his children.

Winter was approaching but the pilgrims were convinced that the Lord would, in consideration of them, send two summers that year and hold the winter off until they had reached the glory land. On October 25, 1902, the Canadian winter set in, and the suffering among the pilgrims became intense. Across the snowy plains of

the Northwest streamed sixteen hundred pilgrims, fervent, convinced, and ready to suffer. They believed the Lord would meet them and when they did not find him at the first village, they felt only that he had tarried to test their faith, that he would certainly meet them at Winnipeg. On they went, filled with faith and longing for deliverance.

In front of them, according to a press dispatch of the time appearing in the New York *World,* was "a majestic figure, black as Boanerges, and with a voice like a bull of Bashan. He was barefoot. On his head was a brilliant red handkerchief, and his body was clothed in a long, dusty, white felt mantle, reaching almost to his feet." Another reporter, of the Manitoba *Free Press,* says of this stalking John the Baptist: "Suddenly he will stop, with eyes glaring before him, then leap forward, clutching the air with extended, groping hands, crying 'I see Him; I see Jesus. He is coming. He is here.' The tension runs through the crowd like a wave at these words, which come periodically." The chanting of the people "rises higher, stronger, and grows more militant as the Spirit-Wrestlers show similar symptoms of seeing Him who is invisible." As they press forward, "ever and anon will arise their plaintive psalm, its weird minor cadences rising and falling with varying strength, now swelling higher on the breeze like martial music, and again sinking into a mournful dirge of sorrow."

The reporter approached John the Baptist as the cold began to fall hard upon them. "Where are your boots?" he asked.

"Jesus had no boots," the leader replied.

"But your feet will get cold."

"Jesus keeps my feet warm," was the patient explanation to this man of the world who lacked the eye of faith.

The reporter for the New York *World* accompanied the pilgrims most of one day, asking questions of them and conversing with the leaders. As the night fell they made their pitiful provisions for camping, hovering as best they could under the blankets and scant clothing

which they had. Before dry oatmeal they gave their favourite chant of the 8th chapter of Romans, then fell wearily to eating. They were all an amiable and kind-hearted lot, even in the midst of their fanatical excitement. When the reporter started to leave, they asked him to read several passages of scripture, which he did by the light of inadequate campfires; then before he could leave he had to shake hands with more than two hundred of the brethren.

Naturally enough the police interfered before the pilgrimage had gone far. On the 28th of October, 1902, more than a thousand women and children were separated from the rest and sent back to their villages. The men were allowed to go on, but a heavy snow began to fall on November 3rd, and the suffering among the six hundred males in search of the Promised Land became so frightful that several of them went insane and were with difficulty restrained from slaughtering their fellows. Five days later, the Northwest Mounted Police rounded up the survivors and put them in box cars for shipment back to headquarters. But not without great difficulty. The Dukhobors are non-resistant, which is to say they will not attack, but they showed a superb stubbornness on this occasion, locking their arms together securely and for hours defying the police.

Back home there was trouble of a mild sort between the mad and the bad Dukhobors—those who went chiding those who didn't—and it is possible that trouble of a serious sort might have ensued, had it not been for the timely arrival of Peter Verigin. He promised that nothing of the sort would happen again. But it did. In the spring of 1903, another pilgrimage began, with the additional feature of the men and women taking off their drawers as they approached any sign of life or village. As one of the pilgrims said, "We stopped, undressed, and advanced." This exhibition had a short life. It was discountenanced by Peter Verigin and stopped at once by the police. The spirit which promoted the pilgrimages, however, would not down. Some of the members of the second affair were thrown into prison, and one who

was allowed to go home, tells us: "Having waited a little while, we began to be active in God's service." By this he meant that they "trampled down a field of corn," . . . "that men should put their trust not in human science but in God." Likewise they burnt a binding machine, . . . "that our brethren should not torment animals but should trust in God." From time to time, outbursts of this nature continued to occur among the Dukhobors, for their religion is too stimulating in its psychology to produce mediocre results. The home of Peter Verigin was burned to the ground by enthusiasts as late as 1916.

III

There are several possible explanations of the pilgrimages, all of them interesting and plausible. One is perhaps too obvious to be mentioned. The pilgrims started for a warm climate, a land of milk and fruit, where they could pick their food from trees. Weary of the harsh and exacting climate of the North, they believed God would lead them to a land that would compensate for the exactions they had suffered. Heavens and Promised Lands in all time have been, as a general rule, the antipodes of the earthy lives of believers. Rockefeller, I daresay, doesn't dream so much of streets paved with gold as did the Southern negro who died in slavery. These pilgrimages were the logical consummation of a religion which promised ultimate rewards in terms of material gain, and though the Dukhobors were not conspicuous for their avarice, they had, as the pilgrimages demonstrate, millennial expectations.

By far more credible and earthly is the explanation offered by Mr. Maude. The trek began immediately after word of Peter Verigin's arrival reached his followers. Furthermore, Peter had written with little restraint to his friends while learning heresies from Baptists, Stundists, and Tolstoyans in Siberia, and though these letters were addressed only to his closest friends, they were later collected and published and circulated among the Dukhobors. There they took on the sanctity and au-

thority generally enjoyed by the epistles of the Apostle Paul among the Nazarenes of the great Middle West. For it will be recalled that Peter Verigin was held by his followers in superstitious reverence and regarded as one who sat upon the great throne of the North, from whence he should return to judge the quick and the dead. These letters had in them material which Peter doubtless would not have circulated among his followers—inflammatory material calculated, if taken literally, to arouse the populace. One quotation will suffice. "In order to be true followers of Christ," says Peter in one of them, "it is chiefly necessary to go and preach the Gospel of Truth, and one may beg bread for the body." That is of course precisely what the pilgrims did. They sallied out to meet the Lord, but they spent their time denying the efficacy of earthly provisions and proclaiming the Gospel to those who would heed it not. Like the Mormons and the Enthusiasts of the Middle Ages, they took neither purse nor script. They returned, as so many religions have done, to apostolic precedent. And, what is more probable still, they went out to meet not Jesus of Galilee but their own private Jesus, Peter Verigin of Oborsk.

As we have seen, Peter Verigin met Count Tolstoy en route to Canada, and either because of the counsel he received or the sound common sense of the leader, his advent was not messianic, but practical and restorative. Whatever his followers may have thought of his holiness, the Canadian government soon learned that now they dealt with a man of honesty and competence, a man who could easily control the obstreperous band of Dukhobors, control them, that is, as far as he chose to do it.

To begin with, he condemned the pilgrimages as fanatical. He introduced modern, improved methods and machinery in the tilling of the soil, and by his executive ability soon transformed the ill organized colonies into a compact and efficient agricultural and even manufacturing community. His skill can never be doubted, and his wisdom, while marred by the peculiar practices of the sect he lead, can never be impugned. But troubles

did not vanish with his coming. The Canadian Government was incensed by the refusal of the Dukhobors to become naturalized citizens of the country which gave them their freedom. Surely Peter could persuade them to do this. Not so. They had always refused, and they did it again. They regarded themselves, as Peter made clear to the Government, citizens of the world. They might be here today and somewhere else tomorrow. They owed no allegiance to government.

Then, too, there was trouble over the homestead entries. The colonies had dealt with the Russian government through a single man. They were communistic and to make private entries of their property would violate the communal principle upon which they worked. Peter Verigin had made entries for them en bloc, but this did not satisfy the authorities. After a long dispute the entries that he had made were cancelled and all of the Dukhobors who refused to become good British subjects were deprived of their homes and given fifteen acres of land for each member of the family. Some became subjects of the King, but the most of them Peter decided to move into British Columbia. He purchased fourteen thousand acres of land at $650,000, a figure which evinces the wealth which this man controlled, and moved six thousand of the eight thousand Dukhobors to the new land of promise.

Even here the troglodytes could not escape the exactions of modern society. The government asked for a careful registry of marriages, births, and deaths, and also suggested rather vigorously that the offspring of the community be sent to Canadian schools. Verigin told the Government very frankly that he held their schools to be a sinister influence, with their boy scout drills and their studies in the pursuit of earthly gain. He dared not trust his protégés to the ethics of Canadian teaching. As for marriages, Peter said that "the marriage contract concerns no one but the two parties interested." This of course was an outrage to the new civilization, but thoroughly in accord with the beliefs of the Dukhobors. They have no official ceremonies. When two want to marry

they ask the blessings of the community and live together until they are no longer happy. It isn't a ceremony but an agreement, considerably in advance of the proposal with which Judge Lindsey has succeeded in arousing the ire and condemnation of modern America. A woman is often a mother before she becomes a wife and divorce is allowed for adultery, with the woman keeping all of the children. The contracting parties must have attained the age of puberty, and this seems to be the only requirement save that of mutual consent. As for schools, why, they said, Christ was never a scholar and he never recommended education to his followers.

According to Verigin, those who refused to obey the Canadian laws were arrested, imprisoned, and in many cases tortured to death. He cites one case of a man who refused to eat meat soup and died as a result of the injection of it into his stomach by means of an operation in prison.[3]

But despite the rigid surveillance to which the people were subjected, they remained peculiar and distinct. Added to their other vices, as I have indicated, they were communistic. Verigin explains that this communism is based on spiritual and not upon economic foundations. They banished the use of money from their colonies, and money has neither moral nor purchasing value within the community. It is controlled by Peter Verigin, who carries on all the transactions with the Chaldeans, but his honesty and probity are above suspicion. Any sums received from the outside are turned over to the communal treasury. The communities are as self-supporting as were those of the Shakers. Food, clothing, and all the necessities are free of charge to everyone. There are no alcoholic drinks, no drug stores, no cigar stores, no doctors, no lawyers, and no clergymen. Those in the communities regard all living creatures as equal brethren in the sight of God, thus duplicating what Mrs. Besant claims to be the one thing that distinguishes Theosophy from every other faith. Of course they eat no

[3] Peter Verigin, "The Truth About the Dukhobors," *Independent*, July 3, 1913.

meat. They are willing to obey the laws of the land when these laws do not infringe upon the law of God. This is not often the case.

Their religious service is simple and informal. It takes place generally from four to six in the morning—an hour doubtless set by the need of secrecy in worship while the Dukhobors still lived in the land of the Czar. Occasionally it is held in the out of doors, or in a large house in the community. There are no more meeting houses than there are among the Hook-and-Eye Mennonites. The ceremony is accompanied by the chanting of sacred hymns and is composed rather largely of oriental bows. Each man bows three times and kisses the man next to him once, then all the men bow to all the women, and the women respond with a collective bow. The women also bow and kiss each other as the men do. Finally all the men and all the women bow at the same time, bringing their foreheads to the ground in oriental fashion.

Another service is described by Maurice G. Hindus. In the service which he saw there were no books, "no ceremonial, no symbols other than the bread, water, and salt, no priest and no leaders." The bread, water, and salt reposed on a table in the centre of the room.

> Stepping forth a pace in front of the table, and facing the bread and water, they alternately took turns at reciting verses of palms, after which they bowed low, touching the floor with their heads. They rose, sang a hymn, a special Dukhobor composition in long, drawn-out wailing tones typical of a large body of peasant songs. Then followed an intermission. The men and women relaxed, chatted, chuckled, as if they were on a visit, and then they sang again. They were tireless singers and each hymn seemed interminable.[1]

Theirs is essentially a folk religion. There are no printed hymn books, not particularly because these devices are of the devil, but because their whole tradition has come down to them by word of mouth and they revere these songs as others revere ballads.

Customs which have distinguished them from the rest of the world of religious practice persist among them with exceptional virility. Because they have withdrawn

[1] Maurice Hindus, "Bookless Philosophers," *Century*, January, 1923.

so completely from the haunts of man, worldliness is less a trial to them, though the solvent influence of democracy and the temptations of modern life have of late made serious inroads among their young men and women. Some of the boys have taken to gin and cigarettes. When they have, they have been properly ousted from the colony, but who knows how many other young men have watched them wistfully as they went? Had they settled in Ohio and Indiana rather than in Saskatchewan and British Columbia, the same fate might have already befallen them that befell the Shakers. And that fate, I believe is still in store for them.

IV

A group of strict, or let us say, Amish Dukhobors has sprung up in recent years, dissatisfied with the growing ease and slovenliness of habits among the old school. These are called the Svobodniki, or Freedomites, and they maintain as a regimen many of the practices which the pilgrims instituted temporarily. They allow no cooked food. They never shave. They have no salt, pepper, vinegar or other condiments. About 1914 they threw their clothes away and became free people. Clothes they regard as the work of man, whereas the body is the work of God. Many travellers have visited them, however, found them fully dressed, and made the silly and civilized request that they strip off and pose for a picture. Their life is normally primitive and they are encumbered by no inhibitions. They express the radical aspect of the Dukhoborsti. They are not educated, and why should they be? Is God educated? They do not bury their dead, for the soul is all and when that is gone, there is nothing to worry about. The body may just as well make a meal for some hungry animal as lie in the ground and putrefy. Of animals they are uncommonly considerate. When a band of them burned an office building in one of the colonies, a building which they regarded as the work of Satan and civilization, the marauders went through it carefully and chased out all the birds

and removed their nests before setting the thing on fire.

Their homes, cellars, orchards and gardens are open to all, says Hindus. Their intercourse with visitors is marked by the greatest of kindness and hospitality. They are supremely happy in what they do and free to talk of their doctrine and the reason for the faith that is within them. They express violent reaction against the cities of the Western world. Some of them have even been to Chicago, and they return home all the more endeared to the simple, native practices and free movements of the wilderness. They have found, for a time at least, the ideal life.[5]

Every safeguard for sobriety is thrown around their common life. They have no holidays. Such occasions, they told Mr. Hindus, "make a man lazy and tempt him to evil acts."

Education they believe makes a man want to live by deception. If his wits are nimble, he does not want to work honestly and soberly at the soil. Their treatment of animals is all a vegetarian of the new school could possibly wish. They would never think of killing a deer, and in consequence these animals roam their fields and pastures as calmly as their own cattle. Nor will they kill rodents either. One old man remarked to a visitor that the squirrels had become very annoying in recent years; that they would clip apples from the trees, and because they were not strong enough to carry these home, would leave them on the ground to rot. The squirrels were remonstrated and admonished. They were driven off time and again. Yet they persisted in coming. "The other day," said the old man, "I caught one and I was so angry, may God forgive me, that I picked up a rod and spanked her." He further promised the miss that if she ever came again he would be tempted to cut off her ears.

There is one further distinctive trait of the Dukhobors as a whole which needs to be emphasized. And if there is a moral to the tale, it falls just here. The Dukhoborsti, so far as I can determine, are the only zealous

[4] Maurice Hindus, "As in the Days of Adam." *Century,* January, 1925.

and literal-minded sect of modern times which has made no effort to impose its will on its neighbours. Its adherents have never proselyted. They have asked merely to be let alone. They have never sent a missionary against the battlements of heathendom and have never claimed their method of life to be superior to that of other peoples. And, at least in this particular, I am inclined to think it is.

VII

THEOSOPHY

I

THEOSOPHY is as old as sin. The term itself was used among the Neo-Platonists and has long been applied to a system called Atma Vidya, or soul science, having its hoary origins in India. In its distinctive modern form, however, Theosophy owes both its genesis and vitality to Madame Helena P. Blavatsky, a woman of cyclonic energy, moderate erudition, and amazing ingenuity. In 1873 this egregious madame was instructed by spirit messenger to go at once from Paris to New York where two years later she founded with H. S. Olcott and W. Q. Judge a "miracle club," which for all practical purposes became the Theosophical Society.

Just what happened to Madame Blavatsky before 1873 is difficult to determine, and the story, like that of St. Peter, must be compounded of both history and tradition. We get no help for her, for what occurred prior to her manifestation she regarded as nobody's business but her own. Writing to an Englishman whom she initiated into the sacred mysteries of the East, she said of her early life:

> I am repeatedly reminded of the fact that, as a public character, a woman, who, instead of pursuing her womanly duties, sleeping with her husband, breeding children, wiping noses, minding her kitchen . . . I have chosen a path that has led to notoriety and fame . . . To those hyenas who will unearth every tomb at night to get at the corpses and devour them, I owe no explanations . . . Had I had lovers and children by the bushels, who is *pure enough to throw openly and publicly* the first stone?[1]

[1] *The Letters of H. P. Blavatsky to A. P. Sinnett,* Transcribed and compiled, with an Introduction, by A. T. Barker, (London, 1925), p. 146.

Though a Russian, she was, curiously enough, not of noble birth, though her father, Peter Hahn, traced his descent from the noble von Hahns of Germany. Born at Ekaterinoslav in 1831, she married General Blavatsky at the age of seventeen and left him after three unhappy months. Her most recent biographer has it that she married him to spite her governess who, in commenting on Helena's furious temper, let fall the remark that even old General Blavatsky could not be persuaded to marry so great a shrew. In three days Helena had made the General propose and the wedding could not be postponed, though Helena hastily repented.[2] The next twenty-five years of her life were spent roving about the world; in the course of her travels she touched on Texas, Cuba, Egypt, India, and other scattered points, freely gathering occult facts wherever they seemed available. Butt tells us that she travelled a great part of the time in men's clothing. It is certain that she visited Voodooists among the Creoles in Louisiana and Indians in Quebec. She wanted to live among the Mormons, but their settlement in Nauvoo was destroyed just before her arrival there, so she packed her ample self and moved upon Mexico.

It suffices that Madame Blavatsky professed to have penetrated, some time during the course of her hidden years, beyond the borders of Tibet, and to have communed with Mahatmas there and in India. The Theosophical Society was the result: ". . . the doctrines and ethics given to the world through the Theosophical Society during the 16 years immediately following its foundation in 1875, emanated from certain Eastern Teachers said to belong to an Occult Brotherhood living in the trans-Himalayan fastness of Tibet." [3] Madame Blavatsky was the Word of these Teachers made flesh. Upon Their existence and Their employment of her as ambassador plenipotentiary the whole framework of Theosophy is based.

[2] G. Baseden Butt, *Madame Blavatsky,* (London, 1926), p. 13.

[3] *The Mahatma Letters of A. P. Sinnett from the Mahatmas M. & K. H.* Transcribed and Compiled, with an Introduction, by A. T. Barker, (London, 1923), p. vii.

Their real existence is of course debated quite as gravely among Theosophists as the deity of Jesus among Modernists. Mrs. Besant, who was later to become president and spokesman of the Society, declared in 1890: "If there are no Masters, then the Theosophical Society is an absurdity." These Masters are Christly figures and must not for a moment be confused with earthly teachers; for though they are, in the phrase of Madame Blavatsky, "supernormal men and not ignorant, flapdoodle gods," their attributes are such as a layman is prone to associate with divinity.

Theosophy, then, is not the confection of isolated individuals, but, in the words of its founder, "the fruit of the work of thousands of generations of Adept Seers." These Adepts, Mahatmas, Masters, Members of the Great White Brotherhood, are dispensers of the World-Wisdom accumulated from the foundation of the cosmos. They have, moreover, ready access to all the works that have been written since the art of writing began; Mrs. Besant reports the existence in a mountain gorge of the East of volumes too numerous to be accommodated by the British Museum. These are merely those to be found beneath a single hamlet of that wonder land.

Hence, when one speaks of a Mahatma, he speaks of a man of no mean proportions. A Mahatma is defined by Mrs. Besant as

> A living man who has evolved more rapidly than the vast majority of the human race and has reached a stage of mental, moral, and spiritual development which will be attained by the race in the future only at the end of millenniums of years. . . .[4]

The similarities between religions point to a single source for all; and that source, says Mrs. Besant, "is the brotherhood of the great White Lodge, the Hierarchy of Adepts who watch over and guide the evolution of humanity." These Teachers have guarded the sacred mysteries of the spirit and, arising, have reasserted them as necessity arose. Jesus was such a Teacher; he lives now "mostly in the mountains of Lebanon; Hilarion in Egypt

[4] Annie Besant, *Exposition of Theosophy*, p. 19.

—he wears a Cretan body; the Masters M. and K. H. in Tibet, near Chigatse, both using Indian bodies; the Master Rakoczi in Hungary but travelling much. . . ." [5]

Just what evidence there is for the existence of these baffling Adepts is never quite clear. Belief in their existence is not compulsory, but leaders of the Society take pains to point out that the more evangelical Theosophists have always believed. Mrs. Besant says:

> I *know,* by personal experiment, that the Soul exists, and that my Soul and not my body is myself; that it can leave the body at will; that it can, disembodied, reach and learn from living human teachers, and bring back and impress upon the physical brain that which was learned . . . that the great sages spoken of by H. P. Blavatsky exist; that they wield powers and possess knowledge before which our control of nature and knowledge of her ways is but child's play.[6]

In the literature of Theosophy the argument runs that the race progresses and that Their existence is therefore probable. There are Those who are as much higher than the civilized man as he is than the savage. The disparities between genius and dolt, saint and criminal, athlete and cripple "are only reconcilable with divine justice if these differences are merely signs of differing stages of growth." At the apex of all human life would logically stand the Master; thus his existence is, to say the very least, inevitable. Moreover, you may ask any Indian today, "and if he has not been Westernized, he will tell you that these men exist, that they have more and more withdrawn from the ordinary haunts of men, and that They are more and more difficult to discover as materiality has made its way and spirituality has diminished."

But in all discussions of the Masters, the experience of Madame Blavatsky is cited as evidence extraordinary; her name stands for apostolic precedent. Many have accused her of falsehood and double-dealing. Indeed there has hardly been a time when she has not been the butt of some accusation. Even A. P. Sinnett, whom she introduced to the Masters, or came so near it that he received letters from Them, turned against her and published an

[5] Annie Besant, *The Masters* (Los Angeles, 1918), p. 76.
[6] Annie Besant, *An Autobiography* (London, 1893), p. 345.

attack, after her death, upon her veracity. In spite of it all, we still have to deal with the facts of her life and her achievements, say the leaders of the Society. A woman of little education, she gave to the world colossal books of philosophy; it is incredible that she should have gotten her material from any other than an esoteric source. As her most worshipful biographer, Alice Leighton Cleather, words it:

> About the middle of the Nineteenth Century the Trans-Himalayan Masters of Wisdom began to prepare an agent through whom They could give out to the world as much of the Light of Truth as the cyclic law permitted at the end of the first five thousand years of the Kali Yuga or Black Age of Indian Chronology.[7]

That agent, it seems hardly necessary to add, was H. P. Blavatsky. She was "mysteriously watched over and guarded from earliest childhood," Mrs. Cleather continues, "(she was born at the 'midnight hour' on July 30–31, 1831) . . ."[8] When the time was ripe she was personally taught and prepared in Tibet by the Brotherhood for her mission. In 1851 she is said to have met her Master in the flesh, though she had known him psychically from childhood. He told her that He wanted her to found a society and that she must spend some time in Tibet.

The upshot of it was the establishment in 1875 of the Theosophical Society in New York. In his *Old Diary Leaves,* Colonel H. S. Olcott says that "the proposal of the society sprang spontaneously out of the topic that was under discussion, namely, "The Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians." Mrs. Cleather denies that Madame Blavatsky really founded the Society at that time and says that the idea of Universal Brotherhood, which was to play so large a part later, was entirely absent from the scheme of this first organization. Madame Blavatsky was in New York at the time, however, working on her *magnum opus, The Secret Doctrine.* Later, in 1879, she went with her colleague and pupil, Colonel Olcott, to

[7] Alice Leighton Cleather; *H. P. Blavatsky, Her Life and Work for Humanity* (Calcutta, 1922), p. 9.
[8] *Ibid.,* p. 13.

India, where she founded the Theosophical Society or Universal Brotherhood.

Whatever the case, the Society has been functioning remarkably ever since 1875 and has been regarded by its members as a vessel into which the spiritual force of the Elder Brothers of the Race is being poured. In summing up the achievements of the Society during the first fifty years, C. Jinarajadasa, Vice-President, said that at first the policy of the society was shaped entirely by advice from the Masters, given either to H. P. B., as Madame Blavatsky is affectionately called by her devotees, or to Colonel Olcott. Then some members, being good Americans, objected to oriental domination, and the affairs were for a time carried on without the aid of the Masters. However, in 1887, Madame Blavatsky saw the dire need of an esoteric basis, says Mr. Jinarajadasa, and she founded the Esoteric School of Theosophy, receiving at the same time letters from the Master K. H., in which the Society is told to leave its esoteric matters to H. P. B. and trust Colonel Olcott only with its exoteric affairs.[9]

Until her death Madame Blavatsky kept her piercing eye on the affairs of the Society. She was a woman of vigour, though in appearance she greatly resembled a hogshead. The uncanny penetration of her eye is evident in every photograph of her and is even noticeable in the statue erected to her memory at the headquarters of the Society in Adyar, India. She smoked incessantly, rolling innumerable cigarettes with "exquisitely moulded fingers." She boasted of complete freedom from the thistle of sex—boasted, too, that women were crazy about her. She had an imperious will, an idiosyncratic method of writing, and on the whole a cold and stiffening quality of mind which was precisely what the theosophical movement needed to make it jell. By her enemies she was regarded as ferocious; by her followers everything she did

[9] C. Jinarajadasa, *The Theosophical Movement and the Masters of Wisdom.* An address at the Eighth Congress of the European Federation of the Theosophical Society, July 21–26, 1923.

PHOTO. VALESKA KLEIN, MADRAS

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

either revealed her otherworldliness or else was excused by her manifest divinity.

To cite an instance of the latter: Mrs. Cleather, long before she became the Madame's votary, expressed the wish to meet her. The appointment was arranged by a friend. Mrs. Cleather scraped together what money she could find and went down to London to peep behind the veil of the temple. Within a hundred yards of the house, her companion, who had arranged the interview, heard loud talking and remarked that "our old Lady" must be in "one of her tempers." So she was. And though Mrs. Cleather had come miles by appointment and at great sacrifice, nothing would induce H. P. B. to see her; rather she berated her companion for attempting to bring a common hag into her presence. Mrs. Cleather remarks that it was, as she later realized, her own unworthiness that made H. P. B. refuse. "We were all unworthy." [10]

Madame Blavatsky died, or was "recalled because we had failed her" in 1891. This last phrase comes from Mrs. Cleather, who believes profoundly that if the Society in London had not been obstreperous and critical, H. P. B. would have been kept alive by the Masters at least until December 31, 1899. She was not left without a witness, however, for in 1896 was published that most curious piece of theosophical literature: *"The Posthumous Memoirs of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky,* Dictated from the Spirit-World, Upon the Typewriter, Independent of All Human Contact, Under the supervision of G. W. N. Yost, to bring to light the things of truth, and to affirm the continuity of life and the eternal activity of the soul immortal. Given to my astral friend and associate, Jos. M. Wade—H. P. B."

The avowed purpose of this monstrous work is "to explain as far as I possibly can the complexity of my solemn, sacred, and phenomenal life." It continues:

My mission was to serve my Masters . . . to give the theories of the Brothers . . . instead of the pusillanimous creeds, bigotry, lies, sacer-

[10] Alice Leighton Cleather, *H. P. Blavatsky As I Knew Her* (London, 1923), p. 3.

dotal effluvia, and the whole establishment of organized hypocrisies which was so powerful at the time when I attempted my mission.

She realizes that "the story may not suit the flapdoodle of my contemporaneous colleagues," but she is sure that

. . . it may as a finality refute and discountenance the absurdities and generalizations of such flimsy literary irritants as, for instance, Arthur Lillie who, whatever his merits as a writer, has added nothing to the welfare of men by such an absurd publication as his *Madame Blavatsky and Her Theosophy,* miscalled a study, when it is, in fact, merely spleen, errors, and a confusion of dates, tending to show that the truth of reincarnation, karma, and the reinvesture of a grand Llama in the esoteric philosophy cannot at all be correct or true, because I, H. P. Blavatsky, was or not in India at the time I said I was.

She promises in the course of her dictated memoirs to return to earth, saying,

My return is no vagary or imagining, but an Occult fact. In the demise of Judge an opportunity has come for me to reannounce myself, and within sixty days look for my re-embodiment among the faithful in the city of New York.

I had thought, of course, that these posthumous memoirs would be regarded as obviously spurious even among theosophists, but in the most recent and authoritative Life of H. P. B. I find a discussion of "an unique kind of otherworldliness," in which Mr. Butt goes on to say:

Strangely enough, the existence of this quality in Madame Blavatsky is confirmed by the Posthumous *Memoirs* (published by Joseph M. Wade, p. 44), in which the spirit of Madame Blavatsky is reported as remarking that "when I was alone, my interior life began and I would wonder off in the yogi state, when hours and days even passed as a minute of time, and in the supernal reverie I learned to hide myself and live with the beings upon a plane of existence whom I found there in inner consciousness."

Mr. Butt follows with this incredible observation, that

Although it is certain that the ego known as Madame Blavatsky cannot have been responsible for the *Posthumous Memoirs,* it is quite conceivable that echoes of her life caught from the astral records may be contained in the book and that the foregoing quotation may be one of them.[11]

[11] Butt, *op. cit.,* pp. 232, 233.

In short, anything about Madame Blavatsky may be quite conceivable.

This ego known as Madame Blavatsky left several books to mark her transient dwelling upon this planet. Far and away the strongest of these is *The Secret Doctrine,* which, with the elaborate writings of Mrs. Besant, may be taken as the almanac of theosophical belief. It is characterized by Mrs. Besant as the story of the world from beginning to end, and of course it came from the Masters and H. P. B. had nothing to do with it save as a recording angel. In her introduction she makes any critic of the work feel self-conscious:

> To my judges, past and future—whether they are serious literary critics or those howling dervishes in literature who judge a book according to the popularity or unpopularity of its author, who, hardly glancing at its contents, fasten like lethal bacilli on the weakest points of the body—I have nothing to say.[12]

Nor will she deign to notice "those crack-brained slanderers" who hope to attract attention by throwing discredit upon "every writer whose name is better known than their own," and who "foam and bark at their very shadows."

The dextrous quality of her mind is well shown in her discussion of the position of the ape in human evolution. She denies that, though she believes profoundly in evolution, man was ever an ape as the scientists of the day asserted. She admits that he may have been ape-like but that "the embryo of man has no more of the ape than it has of any other mammal, but contains in itself the totality of all kingdoms of nature." She points out in *Isis Unveiled* that the "ape is a transformation of species most directly connected with that of the human family—a bastard branch engrafted on their own stock before the final perfection of the latter." [13] The satyrs represent an extinct race of animal men; and it is from the unnatural union of Lilith—"a female hairy animal of character now

[12] H. P. Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine; The Synthesis of Science, Religion, and Philosophy,* (London, 1893), p. 28.

[13] H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled, A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (New York, 1891), p. 278.

unknown"—and Adam, man, that the present apes have descended. There were no apes before men and they will be extinct before the Seventh Race develops. Before this Seventh Race rises upon the earth (with headquarters probably in California), "karma will lead on the monads of the unprogressed men of our race (the Sixth) and lodge them in the newly evolved human forms of the thus physiologically regenerated baboons. . . . This will take place, of course, millions of years hence."

Certainly the epochs of theosophy, in numbers and length, put modern geology to shame. A million millenniums means no more to Madame Blavatsky than a thousand years to the Lord. The occult records tell us that the drama of our globe has seven great acts, and seven great continents are to form the stage upon which this drama is to be played. And, to be sure, there are seven great Races as the Dramatis Personae. We are of the Fifth Race. Two have well-nigh passed away. Remnants of the others people eastern countries and the Sixth and Seventh are yet to come. Madame Blavatsky tells us that the American continent will develop the Sixth subdivision of the mighty Race, and Mrs. Besant sees in our present immigration and assimilation, the fulfilment of prophecy. As for the New continent for the New Race, H. P. B. invokes this out of the depths of the Pacific. It is there already slowly rising, fragment by fragment.[14] What extravagant things will come to pass before that continent is fully formed, only clairvoyant theosophists can speculate.

II

It should be clear from the foregoing that the credo of theosophy is, to say the least, distinct. It is best expressed in the voluminous writings of Mrs. Annie Besant, who had been President of the Society, with headquarters at Adyar, India, since the death of Colonel Olcott in 1906.

In 1895 W. Q. Judge, one of the original founders,

[14] See Annie Besant, *The Immediate Future* (Chicago, 1911), p. 8.

produced letters which he alleged were received from the Mahatmas, asking Olcott to resign and nominating himself as successor. For a time Olcott was cowed by the letters, but when the issue came he refused to resign; he offered evidence that the letters were written by Judge. Mrs. Besant sided with Olcott and Judge withdrew from the Convention in Boston in 1885, taking a majority of American followers with him. Headquarters were later set up by Mrs. Katherine Tingley, who succeeded Judge, at Point Loma, California, under the name Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society. Since that time Mrs. Besant has been constantly in the ascendancy among the bulk of Theosophists.

It was the tenth of May, 1891, that Mrs. Besant knelt before Madame Blavatsky in London and became a member of the Theosophical Society. In so doing she "realized the dreams of childhood on the higher plane of intellectual womanhood." Before that time her life had been stormy and unsettled. As a girl (she was born in 1847) she shared the belief in ghosts and spirits and other occult phenomena which the Irish cherish. Her mother saw visions, and Mrs. Besant tells of one instance in which her mother forecast the death of a child; she said her dead husband appeared to her and told her that he wanted the boy, Will, with him. A few days later the boy died.

She lived a shielded life among maiden aunts, never taking very kindly to the orthodox religious beliefs of her day. At times she was almost seduced by the beauty and odour of high church services, but never quite. She thinks of herself as a courageous woman and says "The Roman Church, had it captured me, as it nearly did, would have sent me on some mission of danger and sacrifice and utilized me as a martyr." She was tormented throughout girlhood and young womanhood by religious doubts, though in 1866 she met a young clergyman down from Cambridge and for a time her doubts left her. The next year they married and were, as Mrs. Besant says, "an ill-matched pair from the very outset." Two children were born to her. Her religious wretchedness, for of

course her doubts returned, was accentuated by the unhappiness of her home life, and at times she became almost suicidal in her distress. One night in 1871 she went so far as to think of chloroform.

As a last resort she went down to Oxford to talk with Dr. Pusey about the frightful state of her belief. Her account of this interview seems to me well worth further record. The learned Doctor would not recognize the question of the deity of Jesus as one for argument.

"You are speaking of your judge," he retorted sternly when I presented this difficulty. The mere suggestion of an imperfection in the character of Jesus made him shudder, and he checked me with raised hand. "You are blaspheming. The very thought is a terrible sin." Would he recommend any books that might throw light on the subject? "No, no, you have read too much already! You must pray; you must pray." When I urged that I could not believe without proof, I was told, "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." And my further questioning was checked by the murmur, "O my child, how undisciplined! how impatient!" [15]

Obviously she got no satisfaction from Dr. Pusey, and some time later she left the Church service without taking communion. All the neighbours thought, of course, that she was ill, for "the idea of heresy in a minister's wife is slow to suggest itself to the ordinary bucolic mind." The absence from communion led to gossip, and in 1873 the marriage tie was broken. When her mother was dying a few years later, she sought in vain for a divine in London who would administer the sacrament to her and her mother. Finally she went in desperation to Dean Stanley of Westminster. He came, with much understanding, and Mrs. Besant speaks of him in the most glowing terms.

In 1874 she first saw Charles Bradlaugh. After his address he began passing out cards in the audience, and as he approached her he said: "Are you Mrs. Besant?" In commenting upon this, Mrs. Besant says:

I know that our instinctive friendliness was in very truth an outgrowth of friendship in other lives, and that on that August day we took up again that ancient tie, and we did not begin a new one. And

[15] Annie Besant, *An Autobiography*, p. 111.

so in lives to come we shall meet again, and help each other as we did in this.[16]

She joined the Freethinker's Society in London and worked with Bradlaugh on behalf of atheism until in 1889 she read A. P. Sinnett's *Occult World* and "added spiritualism to my studies, experimenting privately." She found the phenomena indubitable, but the spiritualistic explanation of them incredible. During this stage she finally "heard a Voice that was later to become the holiest sound to me on earth, bidding me to take courage for the light was near."

A fortnight passed and then W. P. Stead, editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette* sent her two huge volumes, saying, "Can you review these? My young men all fight shy of them, but you are quite mad enough on these subjects to make something of them." She took the books. They were the two volumes of *The Secret Doctrine,* by H. P. Blavatsky.

When she met H. P. B. she says that she was conscious of "a sudden leaping forth of my heart—was it recognition? and then, I am ashamed to say, a fierce rebellion, a fierce withdrawal, as of some wild animal when it feels a mastering hand." From the moment she deserted atheism and took up Theosophy she found what she had sought from youth, and she has never deserted Madame Blavatsky since that time, though there have been rumours of her apostasy. There are charges, for example, that she has led the movement in the direction of the Church of Rome. In connexion with this we shall study the Liberal Catholic movement later. She has, of course, made free use of the ideology of modern science, but whatever the charges, the point remains that in the works of Mrs. Besant are to be found the best expression of theosophical doctrine.

Apart from the doctrine of the Masters, the most conspicuous tenet of Theosophy is belief in re-embodiment. We are all Gods in the making, to use the phrase of one writer. Potentially Calvin Coolidge is a Mahatma, and when Warren G. Harding returns to earth again he will

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 136.

be a whit more ethereal and progressed than he was before. There is reason to believe, the Theosophists say, that the lamented W. Q. Judge, one of the Society's distinguished founders, was the Buddhist King Asoka when last he walked on this earth. The only difference now between James Branch Cabell and William Hale Thompson is a difference of development; the universe is just, and man must go through an endless chain of incarnations, each a trifle higher than the last, until at last he becomes *aseka*—"he who has no more to learn." This magnificent progression is accomplished by means of repeated re-embodiments, interspersed with periods during which the soul is hovering in another realm, being delivered of its dross by heavenly processes. Those of us who are here now are unhappily about what we were before, though small improvement is noticeable to the discerning.

That is the belief. And the priests of Theosophy have so deftly worked out the scheme that they can describe with unfailing precision each episode in this sure-footed progress of the soul. Obviously if the plan's to work, the universe about us must be arranged accordingly. Thus the theosophists proceed to create their world, a happy arrangement of graded planes, each higher than the one beneath it, onto which the spirit of man can move in its march toward perfection. Most common mortals, and even the exceptional ones of the race, hardly get beyond the physical, which is of course the densest, in their sojourn here. The next plane above is the astral, into which the spirit of man occasionally ventures if it is psychic and active. Beyond these are enough more to make the sacred number seven.

These two planes, the physical and the astral, are the only ones which are at all comprehensible to laymen. A plane, as defined by the theosophists, is a region "throughout which the spirit-matter exists, all whose combinations are derived from a particular set of atoms." [17] It is both a division of nature and a "meta-

[17] Annie Besant, *The Ancient Wisdom; An Outline of Theosophical Teachings* (London, 1897), p. 47.

physical idea." As for the astral plane, its spirit-matter "is more vitalized and finer" than that of the physical, and for the most part, "the prison of the physical body shuts us away from the astral world, the physical particles being too gross to be set in motion by astral matter." The astral body is larger than the physical, according to Mrs. Besant, who apparently has measured it, for she says that in the case of an undeveloped man it extends around the physical body for ten or twelve inches. "It floats just over the physical body and cannot go very far from it." In the average man it is still larger and during sleep he is able to roam around in the astral world, "drifted hither and thither by thought currents, while the consciousness is able to receive impressions through the astral covering, and to change them into mental pictures." In the spiritually minded man the astral body is under the complete control of its owner.

> When in it he leaves the physical body there is no break of consciousness; he merely shakes off the heavier vessel and is unencumbered by its weight. He can move anywhere within the astral sphere and is no longer bound by narrow terrestrial limitations.[18]

Thus it is that Adepts and even seasoned yogis in the East are, it is claimed, able to deposit their physical bodies wherever they choose and move about mysteriously as astral beings. Given the fact of an astral body, anything is not surprising. And once the astral world of theosophy is understood, or accepted, re-embodiment really seems quite simple.

One point more about the astral plane. "It is ever answering to vibrations caused by thoughts, feelings, desires, and is thrown into a commotion by any of these." Thoughts are entities; they have atomic reality; just as man's words are transmitted by radio, so his ideas find, too, their wave lengths and are disseminated in the astral atmosphere. "Man," says Mrs. Besant, "is ever sending out angels or devils into the world, for whose creation he is responsible and for whose conduct he is held accountable." Again, "Many a mother's loving prayers go

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

to hover about her son in angel forms, turning him aside from evil influence." An obvious illustration of the part these thought-forms play is cited by reference to national atmosphere, by which the conduct of us all is more or less moulded. It isn't that orators harangue us or history books lie to us; it's simply that the thought-forms of the super-patriots crowd in and decisively influence us. The feeling of dread depression, to which every one of us is at times subject, is nothing but the result of malignant thought-forms rushing in and smothering us.

So in the process of human evolution our activity is not confined to the sordid physical, but may take place on the astral plane as well, to say nothing of the other five which make up the range of the theosophical universe. As we move about our daily business, selling bonds, giving lectures, writing advertising copy, we are watched by the Masters of the Great White Brotherhood. They are quick to single out the promising men of the race and are quite prepared to thrust special opportunities in the path of anyone who shows any special aptitude in things of the spirit. They distribute cosmic energy where it is most needed and in general help on human evolution. If one yields himself more and more to their overtures, "the unsatisfactory and unreal nature of mundane existence presses more and more upon the soul," and he is brought to a probationary path, under the tutelage of a Master, and begins the ascent toward perfection.

Once entered upon this path man becomes a chela, or accepted disciple, of some Master. Here he must acquire certain qualifications, such as discrimination between real and unreal matters, indifference to external things, self-control, and intense longing for liberation —"the yearning of the soul toward solution into deity." Meanwhile he receives much instruction from the Master—usually imparted during the deep sleep of the body.

When the chela has achieved perfection and has really been transmuted into divine essence, he is at once given the chance to renounce his glorious estate and return to earth. (All the great founders of religion have made this sacrifice.) Hence he stands in need of a vessel in which

he may reincarnate. If he is aseka—the process is simple. But no one can reach perfection in a single bound; there is dire need of repeated incarnations, and a chela, while he is yet on the Path, must scout around for a body that will suit his purposes. Occasionally, Mrs. Besant says, a chela may reincarnate in a body that has passed through infancy and extreme youth as a tabernacle of a less progressed ego:

> When an ego comes to earth for a very brief time-period, say fifteen or twenty years, he will be leaving his body at the dawn of manhood, when it is becoming an effective vehicle for the soul. If such a body be a very good one and a chela be waiting for a suitable reincarnation, it will often be watched during the tenenacy of the ego for whom it was originally intended with a view to utilizing it when he is done with it; when the life-period of that ego is completed, and he passes into Kamaloka on his way to Devachan, his cast-off body will be taken possession of by the waiting chela. A new tenant will enter the deserted house, and the apparently dead body will revive. Such cases are unusual but are not unknown to occultists.[19]

Devachan is the theosophical name for heaven; it means happy or bright state; while Kamaloka, "the place of desire," is the name given to the conditions of the intermediate life on the astral plane. It corresponds, to all practical appearance, to the Catholic purgatory. For whether we be chelas or merely brokers in the process of becoming Mahatmas, we must, subsequent to each earthly existence, pass through Kamaloka. In that realm the departed spirit dwells, awaiting reincarnation. The ego's experience there will be determined by his conduct in the life just ended. Here Kamaloka approaches the Christian hell, though there is of course no punishment —merely the inevitable operation of causes set going by the ego throughout his physical existence. The spiritually minded will pass through with phantom swiftness, the good will lumber through, but the bad will have one hell of a time and be acutely conscious while they are having it. There is no fire, but Kamaloka lacks no other property of torture. Mrs. Besant's portrayal of the agony in Kamaloka makes Jonathan Edwards's fire and brimstone seem like frigidaire. She says:

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 304.

One man who had committel an assassination and had been executed for his crime was said, by one of H. P. Blavatsky's teachers, to be living through the scenes of the murder and the subsequent events over and over again in Kamaloka, ever repeating his diabolical act. . . .[20]

The Mahatma K. H. in the Mahatma letters to A. P. Sinnett is authority for the statement that "the very wicked and impure suffer the tortures of a horrible nightmare." And to quote Mrs. Besant again: "A suicide will repeat automatically the feelings of despair and fear which preceded his self-murder and go through the act and death-struggle time after time with ghastly persistence."

Men go to such a place, the argument runs, because they have about them a certain amount of matter belonging to this region, which they must slough off before they can ascend higher.

The atmosphere here is gloomy, heavy, dreary. Men here show out their passions in all their naked hideousness, their naked bruality; they are full of fierce, unsatiated appetites, seething with revenge, hatred, longings after physical indulgences which the loss of physical organs incapacitates them from enjoying.[1]

This truly is hell. But is must not for a moment be confused with the hell of Billy Sunday or mistakenly supposed to be in any given locality. It's going on all around us in the astral realm all the time. Lechers and roués rove ever malignantly about in the spirit world, "crowding round all foul resorts on earth, round brothels and gin-places, stimulating their occupants to deeds of shame and violence, seeking opportunity to obsess them and drive them to worse excesses."[21] The shades of Count de Sade and Bluebeard, I take it, hover around Harlem cabarets.

This malignant influence of the spirits is particularly dangerous in regard to executed murderers, "who surround themselves with an atmosphere of savage thought-forms and, attracted to anyone harbouring revengeful or violent designs, they egg him on into the actual commission of the deed over which he broods."

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
[21] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

It might well be guessed that here too is the hell of the vivisector. His mutilated victims crawl about over his body like vipers, howling, squirming, quivering under the pain of the heartless knife that put them here.

The second region of Kamaloka is only a shade better. For those who people it, Mrs. Besant asserts, are generally worried about something left behind. They will try to communicate with their friends, and if they do not succeed, they will resort to knockings and other noises, "directly intended to draw attention or caused unconsciously by their restless efforts." So acute is the worry of these spirits that "it is charity in such cases for some competent person to communicate with the distressed entity and learn his wishes, as he may thus be freed from anxiety which prevents him from passing onward." [22]

The third and fourth regions of Kamaloka are but etherealized copies of the second. The fifth offers new characteristics, for here are the materialized heavens of all religions. The sixth is inhabited by souls of the advanced type, their delay there due to the "large part played by selfishness in their artistic and intellectual life, and to the prostitution of their talents to the desire-nature in a refined and delicate way." Religionists of a progressed kind pass through this stage of Kamaloka. The seventh region is where the Masters and Initiates have Their intellectual home.

So much for the cardinal point of re-embodiment. The monad, or original entity of the Life Force, passes through the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, until at a high point of animal development he becomes human. He is, however, never an ape, as Madame Blavatsky has conclusively shown. Then begins a further evolution, accomplished by means of repeated incarnation, together with recesses in many stages of Kamaloka. If he lives nobly in the flesh and is purified sufficiently in Kamaloka, he ultimately becomes *aseka*. We are all potential deities—gods in the making. "With reincarnation, man is a dignified, immortal being, evolving toward a divinely

[22] *Ibid.*, p. 98.

glorious end." He is "on the ladder of divinity." Those who saw *The Ladder* during its gratis run in New York will know what I mean.

III

Theosophy has little to say of God as such. He is transfused divine essence, or any other ambiguous combination of words you may confect. In Hastings's *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics,* he is defined for the initiated as the

> One existence which is the source of all existence, potential and actual, the super-life and the super-consciousness in which all life and consciousness inheres, eternal beneath the transitory, changeless beneath the fleeting, unsupported but supporting all, all-embracing, all containing, the One without a Second.[23]

Man is an emanation of God just as a ray is from the sun. Hence to know one's deepest self is to know God. Theosophy posits man's identity of nature with God and his identity of nature with everything in the universe.

We are indebted to the Right Reverend Charles W. Leadbeater for the choicest single piece of literature on Theosophy. Bishop Leadbeater is Bishop of the Diocese of Australia for that curious cult known as the Liberal Catholic Church—a body which deserves separate if not extensive treatment. His writings on Theosophy, however, approximate those of Mrs. Besant both in number and fancifulness. It was with Mrs. Besant that he collaborated in producing during the summer of 1910 the work I am concerned with. He has long been identified with theosophy and is to be remembered chiefly for the litigation involving him and young Jiddu Krishnamurti from 1905 to 1909. Of this, more anon.

The authors of the book mentioned explain that for five evenings a week they shut themselves up in a room, gave themselves over freely to the clairvoyant impulse, and recorded precisely what they saw. Two members of the Society, Mrs. van Hook and Don Fabrizio Ruspoli, were good enough to write down all the entranced au-

[23] Hastings, Vol. XII, p. 301.

thors said. The result of these lucubrations is published under the slender title, *Man: Whence, How and Whither?* After half the story has been told, Mrs. Besant drops out of the picture and in a graceful waiver explains that the rest of the book is solely the work of her collaborator.

In the main the book is an extravagant attempt to sketch the beginnings of the sixth Root Race—the one which shall follow us and occupy a continent not yet born but slowly rising, fragment by fragment, out of the Pacific. The story of the world to date is rather snappily set down, and in it Annie Besant appears as Herakles, W. Q. Judge as "Phocea," H. S. Olcott as Ulysses.

When it comes to deal with the future, however, the book reads like a prophecy of the senior class in the local High. It has to do with events no farther off than 2700 A. D. and concerns itself with a little community of Theosophists who have been set apart for the founding of this new Root Race. The scene is that garden spot of the world, in which Mrs. Besant has already had the foresight to invest—Lower California. The Manu and High Priest of the Race has selected from the sacred circles of the Society a number of assistants with which to breed those superior entities who will people the Great Community. Exogamy is as taboo as it is among the Bantu, for the stock must be kept pure at all costs. The Community dwells apart, bent solely upon producing a race of supermen and superior women. Visitors are neither prohibited nor encouraged to come. The fare is entirely vegetarian, for one of the standing rules is that nothing shall be killed. There is a newspaper-telephone contraption known as the Community Breakfast Chat. Manifestly there is no law or crime, for all are there for the common good and each is motivated by Service.

Moreover, every institution and practice known to us benighted moderns we find transformed by the high purposes of the inhabitants. Marriage, for example, has duty as its great motive, not passion. The ordinary sex passion has been amazingly well dominated, so that marriage has a purely reproductive function. When two

persons wish to marry they go to the Manu and ask a blessing. Usually they arrange well in advance with a prospective son or daughter, so that they can say definitely to the Manu that such and such a man wishes to be born from them. It sometimes happens that the prospective offspring actually arranges the marriage:

> One man will call to another and say: "I am expecting to die in a few weeks and I should like to have you and Miss X for my father and mother. I have some karmic ties with both of you that I should like to work off; would that be agreeable to you?" [24]

The Bishop informs us that the plan works well.

At the time when Bishop Leadbeater looks into his clairvoyant crystal, the Council, composed entirely of men, is conducting experiments in the creation of mind-born babies. "They have produced some respectable copies of humanity, but have not succeeded in satisfying the Manu." Just where the entities to embody in these mind-made babies are drawn from is not clear; but as Gaius Glenn Atkins, observes, Theosophy predicates an endless storehouse of souls upon which to draw. Hence, so small a problem should not greatly complicate the work of the cosmic statistician.

Meanwhile parentage remains a matter of satisfactory arrangement between all parties concerned. It is hardly necessary to say that death is entirely voluntary in this paradisaical community, and of course "nobody looks old until at least eighty." When a man begins to feel his earthly tabernacle dissolving, he at once looks about for a suitable rebirth. He selects a father and mother whom he thinks would suit him, goes to them and asks if they would care to have him next time. If they consent, he informs them that he is soon to die, hands over his personal talisman to them, takes up his abode at their house and dies conveniently at home.

As a rule the dying man is allowed to select his sex during the next embodiment. Many seem to practise alternating, "but if the number of any sex falls below what

[24] Annie Besant and Charles W. Leadbeater, *Man: Whence, How and Whither?* (London, 1913), p. 417.

it should be, the Manu calls for volunteers to bring things once more into harmony."

IV

To simplify Theosophy would be to misrepresent it; but, once understanding what theosophists believe—as well as the dimensions of their belief—we can well appreciate the significance of young Jiddu Krishnamurti and his auspicious visits to America. It is the theory of Theosophy that the spirit of the World Teacher—that same Spirit which was manifest in Yvasa, Zoroaster, Christ, and Buddha—is bound to come again. Indeed Mrs. Besant has felt since 1911, when she delivered her lectures, *The Immediate Future,* that the time was ripe for his appearance. She had discovered Jiddu at Adyar, India, in 1908, and he was at that time introduced as the coming vehicle. A year later he wrote a book, the contents of which were revealed to him in a profitable dream supervised by the Masters of the Trans-Himalayan fastness.

Before his departure for America in 1926, Krishnamurti held, under the auspices of the Order of the East, a gigantic camp meeting in Ommen, Holland. This Order is distinct from the Society, though many persons are members of both organizations. The Order corresponds to the millennialists among the Christians, for it believes that the advent of the World Teacher is imminent. During this great meeting at Ommen, many of the pilgrims became convinced that

> . . . the World Teacher's spirit has taken possession of the young Indian, Krishnamurti, the same spirit that occupied the body of the man Jesus. Mrs. Besant said today: "Several times the World Teacher has used the appointed vehicle. The moments of actual possession are becoming more and more frequent and will shortly be permanent."
>
> Krishnamurti has now reached the stage, his followers say, where he is able to leave the carnate body at will and commune with the World Teacher in occult regions.[25]

It must be recalled that the graded hierarchy which

[25] New York *Times,* July 29, 1926.

stands over and above all human and cosmic activity is divided into two departments. One shapes the outer evolution; the other, "holding in its hands the great circle of Truth, gives out portions of that Truth from time to time . . ." The Ruler and the World Teacher are the department heads. "While the Ruler carefully evolves the people and shapes subrace after subrace, the World Teacher is standing beside him." He comes to each of these races when the time seems propitious and gives to each precisely what it needs. Thus we have what is to all appearances a great series of teachers but what is in fact the Spirit of the one and the same Teacher appearing again and again.

Hence Krishnamurti. It was unfortunate that the World Teacher was detained at Ellis Island on grounds of moral turpitude. This detention involved Bishop Leadbeater. As reported by the *Times:*

> The long-standing turmoil in theosophical circles during the trials and reinstatements of Dr. C. W. Leadbeater, Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church, were recalled yesterday when a complaint was made to the Ellis Island authorities that on moral grounds Krishnamurti should not be admitted to this country. Krishnamurti's father once sued Dr. Leadbeater to have his son removed from the influence of the doctor, which he said was harmful.[26]

Because of this unfortunate affair, and the flippancy of some of the newspapers the official reception was cancelled. Prominent Theosophists met the boat, however —among them James Montgomery Flagg.

Krishnamurti's visit was singularly unlike a god's. He came to bring peace and not a sword. His book, *The Kingdom of Happiness,* comprising the talks given at Ommen, was much too inane to excite the populace or bring down upon him the wrath of the Sanhedrin. In Chicago he is declared to have received the greatest shower of flowers ever emptied upon a distinguished visitor. He was a guest of the advertising men's post of the American Legion, being introduced as a "mystic and a regular fellow," and to them he said that India's spirit-

[26] *Ibid.,* August 23, 1926.

uality and America's materialism needed to be fused into perfection. Like a good Twentieth Century messiah he preferred a private Pullman to the back of a donkey and luxurious hotel suites to the garden of Gethsemane. For his wilderness he used the nine hundred acre estate that he and Mrs. Besant had purchased near Santa Barbara, California.

After a stay of nine months he sailed without ceremony. Reporters found him reclining in a deck chair, dressed in a grey lounge suit, tan shoes and spats, reading *Elmer Gantry*. On the whole his advent had been a fizzle. The idea of a messiah with an Oxford accent and tweed trousers somehow missed fire in the minds of most Americans; he wore his nimbus much too jauntily. And the young man's manifest concern with ease and luxury lent a deal of irony to his parting words: "The chase for gold has taken the American people away from a religion founded upon basic philosophy."

He returned to us in the spring of 1928, still benignly confident of his mission among us. "I am," he said, "the Voice of the Great Teacher. I have the Spirit. You may not believe it. I don't care; it makes no difference to me." [27] After a brief stay in New York he left for his estate in California, where, as the centre of a theophany, he purposes to create order out of the present religious chaos. Yet the tantalizing fact remains that in that worthy enterprise he comes into messianic competition with at least a score of others.

[27] New York *Sun*, April 9, 1928.

VIII

THE NEW THOUGHT

I

Erect a mental gymnasium, and utilize every silent and unoccupied hour, whether day or night, when awake, in swinging the dumb bells of concentration upon high ideals. . . . Even disorder and pain, when rightly interpreted, may be regarded as only spectres that prowl in the basement of our nature to drive us higher.

THIS effusion will serve as well as any to ring up the curtain on New Thought. From the time it was first known as the "Boston Craze" down to the present miraculous feats of the School of Silent Unity, the movement has spawned a literature so fulsome and poetic that any account of it seems a deliberately chosen body of grotesque Americana. It is at once meaningless and profound, Rotarian in content and philosophical in tone. Palatable ideas about man's divine estate were long ago the cud of its apostles, and now when one of them writes a book, he merely regurgitates what the Reverend Warren Felt Evans stored away in 1889.

While defined as an "attitude of mind and not a cult," it takes its place solidly in the front rank of all religions. Its God "is immanent in nature, finding expression in every creative energy, colouring the rose, moulding the leaf, painting the sunset, clothing grass with beauty, teaching the bird its song." It offers man an exalted view of himself and his importance in the universe—a view in this way unexcelled by that of any religious cult since the days of Eden. Whereas Theosophy teaches that we are gods in the making, New Thought teaches that we are now Gods in reality. Ralph Waldo Trine, most reputable of New Thought writers, in his book, *What All*

the World's A-Seeking, addresses his readers thus:

> There is no separation between your soul and the soul of the universe. In the deepest sense you are the great universal soul. . . . Man is God incarnate.

The same writer, in another of his books—*In Tune With the Infinite*—reasons that, since the power of God is clearly without limit, the only reason for the apparent impotency of man is the limitation imposed by man's own lamentable failure to know himself. To supplement this idea I quote from Newcomb:

> We have latent within us such powers over matter as we have just begun to dream. In the scheme of creation we shall ourselves rank as creators, with rare ability to disintegrate and reintegrate at will such forms as we shall choose to bring into visible existence. . . . We are already warranted in boldly claiming that we have no limitations except those we have imposed on ourselves. [1]

This quality of god-almightiness is the *sine qua non* of the New Thought. If its emphasis has gradually shifted during the past fifty years from curing bodily ailments to securing personal efficiency and charm, it still relies for its success upon the slumbering deity within. Every man's soul is a chip off the divine block; my nature is identical with the Divine Nature. "Man is a microcosm of God," and no harm can befall him if he swings properly the dumb-bells of concentration, for inspiring thought! man is God. To this effect the International New Thought Alliance, in convention assembled during 1917, spoke as follows:

> Man is made in the image of the God, and evil and pain are but tests and correctives that appear when his thoughts do not reflect the full glory of the image.

"While Christian thought would bring God down to man, New Thought would lift man up to God, i. e., the consciousness of his own divinity." Those are the words of S. D. Kirkham, who in his book, *The Ministry of Beauty,* defends the New Thought theology with these significant words: "If the sole divinity of Jesus is denied,

[1] Newcomb, *Discovery of a Lost Trail,* p. 255.

the divinity of all men is affirmed." In brief, the New Thought would make a Jesus of every man, and its posits for those who take its lessons the same miraculous power and transcendent worth of character that Christendom generally assumes to have characterized the life of Jesus while he walked on earth.

Upon this benign view of the higher mammal the New Thought for ever rests. It is not strange that the movement has attracted to its standards clodhoppers of every variety—common duds who have put on their ascension robes after taking three lessons in the power of the will. By its methods, fifteen minutes a day will make a god of any man. Its doctrines form a most illuminating commentary upon the current scene, for, as we shall have occasion to see, the New Thought is American psychology working naked.

II

The New Thought began as a therapeutic enterprise. Warren Felt Evans, who shepherded a small flock of Swedenborgians in New Hampshire, was the first oracle of the new therapeutism taught by Phineas Parkhurst Quimby and later filched by Mary Baker Eddy. I quote from the works of Evans:

> Be like Jesus, every one's friend. Seek to make everybody and everything happy. . . . Get well by curing others. Impart life, communicate from your own stock of vital force to others. Jesus healed first the mind, then the body. He removed the spiritual cause of the disease, and the physical effect ceased. He addressed himself as a spirit to the spirit of the patient.

Evans believed that "everything in its last analysis, or when we come to its inmost reality, is only a *thought.*" He continues:

> What we call the external world and the human body, which is a part of it, are the thought of God, and we come to know them only as far as we think them. Disease, like every *thing,* is created, or at least has an existence only by thought. In the phrenopathic method of cure, it is fundamental principle that thought is the ground of all reality.[2]

[2] Warren F. Evans, *The Divine Law of Cure,* (Boston, 1885), p. 258.

It is not by accident that the above reads suspiciously like the general belief of Christian Science, Divine Science, and other schools of mental healing. All of these quackeries stemmed from a common root, and that root was none other than Phineas P. Quimby. Evans we may take as Quimby's interpreter, for self-expression was not one of Quimby's salient points. Yet the impression must not be left that Quimby never put pen to paper. Beginning in 1859, he wrote furiously on the themes which gripped him most, and during the remaining years of his life he filled more than eight hundred closely written pages of manuscript covering over a hundred and twenty subjects.[3] The majority of these manuscripts, closely guarded by his son and occupying the same relation to *Science and Health* that the non-canonical books do to the Bible, were not published until 1921, when Horatio W. Dresser gained the permission of Quimby's descendants and put them out in carefully annotated form. I have heard rumours of suppression, which the publishers deny; at any rate *The Quimby Manuscripts* are to be found in any reputable library and they are a document of rare importance to those who care to trace the connexion between the New Thought and Christian Science.

For our present purposes it suffices to say that the Quimby manuscripts contain the germ of the whole buoyant philosophy which has swept America under the direction of both the New Thought and the First Church of Christ, Scientist. I can only cite a few quotations from the writings of Quimby to show the birth he gave to mental healing:

> Man is made up of truth and belief; and, if he is deceived into the belief that he has, or is liable to have, a disease the belief is catching and the result follows it.

Again:

> The Science that I try to practice is the Science that was taught eighteen hundred years ago, and has never had a place in the heart of man since; but it is in the world and the world knows it not.

[3] *The Quimby Manuscripts,* Edited by Horatio W. Dresser, (New York, 1921).

The fact is, that what the public generally supposes to be Christian Science is nothing more than the New Thought of Phineas P. Quimby. I do not say they are the same. Indeed, there exist sharp differences between the two systems. But it is safe to say that the simple ideas of the influence of mind over body and matter are essentially the ideas that Phineas put into the world in 1859. Christian Science offers a more abstruse system of interpretation, one that rings with noisy words and frightful philosophical ideas which only the initiated know. What Quimby taught, and what the New Thought appropriated from him, was purely the value of healthy mental states. He felt that the medical profession was first and foremost a conspiracy to remind humanity of its ailments, that we suffer because we are constantly reminded of suffering, and that the very demeanour of a doctor in a sick room is enough to kill the healthiest of men.

Quimby must undoubtedly be reckoned as the father of natural or mental therapeutics in the modern craze it has enjoyed. As Dresser remarks in his *History of the New Thought Movement,* "When lines of inquiry are to be developed for the good of mankind, God usually summons a man from the common walks of Life." Quimby is certainly not to be accounted for by his education. His father was a blacksmith, and the lad Phineas attended the district school at Belfast, Maine, where he spent a good part of his therapeutic life. He appears, so Mr. Dresser says, never to have heard the names of Berkeley or Emerson. He studied the New Testament only late in life and he shows no acquaintanceship with any of the learning of his day. He had his own system of spelling and his own rules of grammar, which, if they did not always coincide with those of the school books, at least had the virtue of being uniform, and he followed them consistently. His son affirms that he was a thoroughgoing religionist, "fully believing in immortality and progression after death, though entertaining entirely original conceptions of what death is." When

dying, Quimby said, "I do not dread the change any more than if I were going to Philadelphia."

Quimby began his labours as a mesmerist. Mesmerism, which reached its high tide in France and Germany, 1770–1790, was revived in France after the French Revolution and found its way to America through the agency of Charles Poyen, a Frenchman, in 1836. During one of his public performances in Belfast, Maine, Poyen failed singularly in his attempted feats and charged that someone in the audience had perverted his hypnotic influence. "Park," as Quimby was called in the village, stayed to talk with Poyen and the Frenchman was quick to see that the lad had remarkable psychic powers. Quimby began at once to experiment with these powers and found that, sure enough, he could exert a remarkable influence over the people of the village.

He took up with a certain Lucius Burkmar, who proved to be an unusually good subject, and the two made frequent excursions to the surroundings towns, often being rewarded for their performances by the anger of a New England mob who seem to have regarded them as he-witches. One day there happened into town a certain John Bovee Dods; this practitioner seized at once upon Burkmar and they were off at once on a tour from town to town. When Burkmar returned, Quimby found that Dods had been using the lad to read clairvoyantly the minds of the patients and that Burkmar, while in a state of hypnotism, had persuaded the patient to buy the patent medicines which Dods made his living by hawking. Immediately Park tried the method and found it successful. The ailing person would take readily what Lucius Burkmar suggested and the results obtained were miraculous.

Quimby was not without an analytical quality of mind. One day he suggested to the sleeping Burkmar that he prescribe simple herbs for the cure of a dangerous disease. The patient readily assented and the cure was every whit as remarkable as though some powerful patent medicine had been offered. Quimby became at

once convinced that Lucius was reading the mind of someone present—in all probability the mind of the patient, and that, by the use of mental influence, he could cure disease readily without recourse to drugs. This was the beginning. He would put Lucius into a mesmeric state; the lad would examine the patient, describe his disease, then prescribe for its cure. The procedure worked nine times out of ten, and upon the basis of its success, Phineas Quimby evolved the philosophy that disease is an error of the mind and not a reality of the physical body.

Quimby himself was in a bad way. He had, in fact, been given up to die. One day, however, he got out with a stubborn mare, who refused to climb a hill. He was forced to lash her buttocks and to coax her up and down hill all the way home. He explains that under the excitement of the occasion, he found he had more strength than he had dreamed of, and he began to doubt the doctor's diagnosis. That diagnosis was depressing enough. He was told that his kidneys were partly consumed and that he had ulcers on the lungs.

> This was the state I was in when I commenced to mesmerize. On one occasion when I had my patient (Lucius) asleep, he described the pains I had in my back, and he placed his hand on the spot where I felt the pain. He then told me that my kidneys were in a very bad state—that one was half-consumed, and a piece three inches long had been separated from it, and was only connected by a slender thread. This I believed to be true. . . . I asked him if there was any remedy. He replied, "Yes, I can put the piece on so it will grow, and you will get well." He immediately placed his hands on me, and said he united the pieces so they would grow. The next day he said they had grown together, and from that day I have never experienced the least pain from them.[4]

The subject had done nothing more than read the mind of Quimby, discover what he thought was his disease, and then prescribe some simple remedy in which Quimby was led to believe.

In 1859 Quimby went to Portland, Maine, where he remained until 1865, at which time he went off ignomin-

[4] Quoted by Horatio W. Dresser, *A History of the New Thought Movement* (New York, 1919), p. 32.

iously to die with an ulcer of the stomach. During the years at Portland he performed many remarkable cures and began to be widely and favourably known throughout New England. The standard medical science was of course frightful during this period. Its bunglesome methods and unsound theories invited departure from the ordinary course of medical treatment and offered such fellows as Quimby a remarkable chance for success. It was while he plied his new trade at Portland, Maine, that Mary Baker (Glover) Patterson came to see him. As early as 1861, Dr. Patterson, who was at that time the husband of the woman who is known to the world as Mary Baker Eddy, wrote to Dr. Quimby, soliciting the aid of his "wonderful power" for the restoration of his wife, who had been an invalid for a number of years.

The connexion between Mrs. Eddy and Quimby will be touched on more sharply in the chapter devoted to Christian Science. Here I give only those facts which are pertinent to the story of the New Thought. Unless we are careful, says Sybil Wilbur, Mrs. Eddy's biographer, we will "stray into the quagmire and find ourselves believing that all that follows in the life of Mary Baker Eddy was the result of her meeting this man." And that is simply because Quimby made upon Mrs. Patterson a most acute and profound impression. His fame had travelled far and she was only one of the ailing ladies of the time who felt that if life held any health for her it was to be found through the instrumentality of Phineas Parkhurst Quimby. She raked together enough coin to make the trip to Portland, and at the first silent treatment she received from Quimby, she met with almost immediate relief. Indeed she was even good enough to publish a running account of her recovery in the Portland *Evening Courier,* beginning a series of letters carrying a daily statement of her health and improvement with these words:

> When our Shakespeare decided that "there are more things in this world than are dreamed of in your philosophy," I cannot say of a verity that he had foreknowledge of P. P. Quimby. . . .

There follows a rigmarole which is not pertinent to our discussion nor was it pertinent to the readers of the paper; it has only the value of showing that very early in life—long before she tackled *Science and Health,* Mrs. Patterson Eddy was given to Johnsonese that would have enraged Johnson himself. The letter proceeds:

> Three weeks since I quitted my sick room. The belief in my recovery had died out in the hearts of those who were most anxious for it. With this mental and physical depression I visited Quimby and in less than one week from that time I ascended by a stairway of 182 steps to the dome of the City Hall, and am improving ad infinitum.

In a letter to Quimby dated January 12, 1863, Mrs. Patterson speaks of herself as a "living wonder and a living monument to your power," as a result of which "five or six of my friends are going to see you." In another letter: "Dear Doctor, what could I do without you? Who is wise but you?" Again: "P. P. Quimby rolls away the stone from the sepulchre of error and health is the resurrection."

The incredulous will find these letters, together with other more damaging testimony, in *The Quimby Manuscripts.* They suffice to show, I believe, that Quimby was regarded by at least some of his contemporaries as a remarkable man. Mrs. Eddy paid another visit to him in 1864, and while there, talked long and patiently with him about his methods. After his death, Mrs. Patterson wrote to Julius W. Dresser, a close friend of Quimby's, told of a serious fall she had had on an icy pavement, and of her speedy recovery by Quimby methods. She explained, however, that she had become depressed by friends since her recovery, and she prayed Dresser to take up Quimby's work and render her some assistance. But Dresser did not feel equal to the task and Warren Felt Evans had not yet written his first book.

There follows, then, a noticeable hitch in the gait of the movement that the lamented Quimby had set on foot. It was not until 1875 that the first edition of *Science and Health* was published, and by that time Phineas Quimby was only a memory to Mary Baker Patterson. In short,

what had started out to be New Thought became, for a time at least, Christian Science. Not until 1883 did the followers of Quimby awake from their slumbers to see their cherished ideas taking form in an alien cult. By that time Mrs. Eddy had denied Phineas three times every day. In a letter to the Boston papers, dated March 7th of that year, she admits she knew Phineas about twenty years ago, "and aimed to help him." "We saw he was looking in our direction and asked him to write his thoughts out. He did so, and we then would take the copy to correct, and sometimes would transform it so that he would say it was our work, which it virtually was; but we always gave him the copy back." Mrs. Eddy goes on to say that she tried hard to gain him public favour, "and it wounded me to see him despised."

Obviously no one was in line for the mantle of the Prophet Phineas. New Thought got under weigh heavily and has moved at a lumbering, sprawling gait ever since. Its devotees teach and practise individualism of a determined sort and succumb unwillingly to the ardours of organization. In the early days meetings devoted to the new therapeutism came to be held from time to time. The silent treatment practised was akin to prayer and "the silence," as it has since been called, became a notable feature of the meetings. Ministers of the liberal kind —the movement has always been identified with the liberal theology—began to attend and supplied the worship feature. The first of these societies, according to Dresser, was in Boston, where with appropriate extravagance, it was called "The Church of the Divine Unity." Dr. Holcomb, another Swedenborgian, was the first writer to employ the term New Thought capitalized. With all deference to Quimby, Holcomb may be said to be the true founder, for, as a friend of mine has remarked, were it not for capital letters and hyphens, there would be no New Thought. In 1887 Mr. Charles M. Barrows, "formerly a teacher and well acquainted with the history of thought, pointed out that idealistic conceptions were in the writings of Emerson, howbeit therapeutics had not until then noted the resemblance." Thus

Emerson became identified with the movement and remains to this day one of its involuntary fathers. Recently there has been announced a booklet, *Emerson's Concept of Truth.* This has been arranged by Henry Richardson Thayer, who explains that "not a word of Emerson's has been changed or added to, but widely separated sentences have been brought together. Price 28 cents."

Other names were of course suggested. In Boston, Higher Life. In England, Higher Thought. In New York the little group was for a time known as the circle of Divine Ministry. In the West the movement became known as Divine Science or Practical Christianity. But the term New Thought won out, gaining currency during the first meeting of the Metaphysical Club in Boston during 1894–1895. It was used also as the title of a little magazine published at Melrose, Massachusetts, in 1894. The Metaphysical Club gave the movement impetus, for the purposes were cleverly disguised by the importation of such speakers as Julia Ward Howe and Hamilton Wright Mabie. By 1899 there were enough votaries for a convention in Boston and there had been earlier convocations of the Disciples of Divine Science in Western cities.

A constitution and by-laws for the International New Thought Alliance were published in 1916, affirming the purpose of the society to be:

> To teach the infinitude of the Supreme one, the Divinity of Man and his infinite possibilities through the creative power of constructive thinking and obedience to the voice of the Indwelling Presence which is our source of Inspiration, Power, Health, Prosperity.

In 1917 the New Thought Alliance proclaimed:

> The essence of New Thought is Truth, and each individual must be loyal to the Truth he sees. The windows of his soul must be kept open at each moment for the higher light . . .
>
> We affirm health, which is man's divine inheritance. Man's body is his holy temple. Every function of it, every cell of it, is intelligent, and is shaped, ruled, repaired, and controlled by mind.
>
> We affirm the divine supply. He who serves God and man in full understanding of the law of compensation shall not lack.

Obviously this national intoxicant is compounded of many elements brewed over the flames of egotism and served in barrels to all who join the picnic. And before we witness the curious spectacle of the plebeian populace drunk on divinity, we need to understand what may be roughly called the philosophy of the New Thought as exemplified by its most advanced thinkers.

From the outset the movement has fattened upon two carcasses—that of a pathetic and often atrocious medical science and, equally, that of a monstrous, blood and iron theology. Both medicine and theology have grown less and less egregious since 1875. They have felt the solid impact of modern thought, and the movement started by Quimby and Evans has been in the front rank of the fierce reaction against them. And the fact that the evils against which the first attack was launched have been ameliorated accounts, I think, for the recent preoccupation of the New Thought with such questions as how properly to use the divinity in all of us to get sex appeal, prosperity, and at least a modicum of happiness out of life.

Of course the message of good health by drugless methods is still borne joyously by the disciples of New Thought. Even Henry W. Dresser, whose point of view is that of an historian, softly voices the conviction that, "there is a simple, natural way out of every trouble, that kind nature, which is another name for an omniscient God, is every ready to do her utmost for us." The temple of New Thought rings with sounds of cosmic joviality and good humour. Its God is both a father and a mother, and it is inconceivable that we should suffer pain and sorrow under such beneficent parentage. "True life," says Mr. Newcomb, one of its most intense exponents, "is unutterable sweetness in which all the shadows of our yesterdays are woven into the soft tints of the morning sunshine."

Disease, then, is clearly an impostor. It has no rightful place in the present kingdom of the Lord and will in time be banished from the earth. Mind is everything; the carnality of our minds accounts for disease and the purity of our minds will remedy it. Patterson, in his book,

In The Sunshine of Health, says: "The many inflammatory diseases that come from poor circulation and poisoned blood are simply the expression of inflamed mental conditions." Trine, in *All's Right with the World,* asserts: "The fevers and distempers of the body only externalize those of the mind." When we think that "God is the infinite spirit of which each one is a part in the form of an individualized spirit," we can readily see why sickness is absurd and its cure a matter of simple practice. This cure proceeds, as we shall have adequate occasion to see in a moment, by a method of simple affirmations and visualizations. One of these affirmations, as supplied by Paul Ellsworth in *The Gist of the New Thought,* follows:

> I am an expression of Divine Life, and in vitality, body, and affairs I show forth the limitless love, power, and wisdom of my Father."

We must not falsely suppose the New Thought to be simple; its feats are not performed by the sheer influence of mind over matter. In point of fact the mind seems never strong enough to cure the body unless it works in terms of ritual and symbol; the process must be mysterious. Christian Science would still have been a struggling troupe of shoemakers in the slums of Boston if its methods had been what people commonly supposed they were. The same is true of the New Thought. It invokes formulae and anoints with mental oil. Julia Seton, in her book, *The Psychology of the Solar Plexus,* teaches that disease derives from a lack of harmony between the physical body and the inner bodies; and then she offers this advice:

> To correlate the first and second bodies, get a beautiful thought and then begin to breathe deeply through the nose and exhale through the mouth, thereby massaging the solar plexus and increasing its blood flow.

Newcomb, in *The Principles of Psychic Philosophy,* quotes with great force the old Rosicrucian formula, thoroughly applicable to the ritualistic method by which the New Thought operates.

God is love. God is law. We are law.
God and Love and Law are one. We are Love.
We are one. We are God.

The therapeutism of New Thought must not be confused with that of Christian Science. There are points of similitude between the two beliefs, but their methods of healing, or rather their philosophies of healing, differ sharply. I quote from Patterson:

Christian Science and the New Thought agree that all life is one; that God is all in all; that all intelligence is one. And they disagree on the following points: Christian Science says the visible world is mortal mind; the New Thought declares the universe to be an expression of God's work. Christian Science asserts that sin, sickness, and death have no existence. The New Thought affirms that they have an existence; but that their existence is only limited and their destruction comes through right thinking and hence right living.

The absolute idealism of Christian Science denies the existence of matter, while the New Thought is content to say that mind expresses itself in matter and is able to control it. Christian Science relies upon external authority to enforce its decretals; the New Thought is forever calling to the God within. In short, the New Thought is one gigantic attempt to spiritualize matter by asserting that it is wholly amenable to the control of mind. In an attempt to distinguish between matter and mind and spirit and yet not get into the throes of materialism, Newcomb says:

Matter is mind at a slower rate of vibration. Mind is a matter at a high rate. Spirit is infinitely more rapid than either and rules both.

I have said that the New Thought arose in part as an insurrection against the grim theology of yesteryear. In the manner of Spiritualism and for widely different reasons, it recruited its ranks in the early days from discontented clergymen of the Unitarian and Universalist Churches. That such ministers were in evidence at the early sessions of the Metaphysical Club and were numbered among the advocates of Quimby's teaching, we have seen. Henry Harrison Brown, in *The New Thought*

Primer, says that "in Transcendentalism we may properly locate the birth of New Thought," and that "in Unitarianism we find the nearest approach on the intellectual side."

The fact is that the rise of modernism has virtually taken the wind out of the movement's sails. Time was when the Metaphysical Club and the Church of the Higher Thought offered a refuge to weary ministers who suffered from the bludgeoning of conscience. Here they could advocate, without the feeling of insincerity, the doctrine of humanism which has now come to be the stock in trade of all modernist clergymen. Here the impact of the new knowledge was not only felt, but admitted. Indeed it may be said that through the New Thought and its often indelicate doctrines, the field was ploughed for the gorgeous crop of Christian humanism which has of late years begun to sprout in America. The New Thought has always boldly denied Genesis, and it was among the first expressions of the happy thought that there is no conflict between real science and true religion. Both have long been regarded by its writers as a quest for Truth. To quote Abel Leighton Allen, "Science in its broadest aspect is a search for the knowledge of God."

Obviously, then, it has brought to theology certain savoury ideas which the stomach of the Nineteenth Century needed and relished. Many clergymen found here both the kind of ideas and the freedom and independence which they wished. But none the less we must observe that many of its tenets are yet far in advance and considerably different from the wildest doctrines entertained by modernists. Its humanism is not Christian humanism, and its deification of man has always outraged the general sense of theological propriety. In the abstract, its theology leaves little room for priestly mediation or for any of the saving devices of religious systems. That being the case, we cannot expect the clergy in general to take very kindly to the New Thought. "Man's fall," it insists, "has been upward. He began in the lowest form of animal life and now stands at the summit of creation."

Perhaps the worst crime that the New Thought commits against theology is to be found in its resonant denial of evil. Allen charges that the concept of evil derives largely from a conspiracy on the part of the Churches, that they have created a Satan to incarnate that evil, whereas, in point of fact, evil is only misdirected energy. "All forces," says he, "are good and only as they are misdirected do they produce harm. . . . The New Thought does not teach the moral depravity of man. Such thoughts demoralize and weaken the individual."

Being without a devil, this cult concerns itself with good entirely, and with the result that the literature of it is effusive and often sticky. Even Mrs. Eddy had her devil, but the New Thought has none. It talks for ever of high ideals and divine precepts until one is shortly surfeited. Its view of prayer, for example, is vague and florid:

> Prayer is the bringing of the conscious mind into touch with the universal mind. It is lifting the soul into the presence where one feels the glow, the beauty and the harmony of the divine presence, and the glory of vibrations that are the source of universal truth.

It has given to the world such poetry as that of Ella Wheeler Wilcox. I quote from her volume, *New Thought Pastels:*

> All sin is virtue unevolved,
> Release the angel from the cloud—
> Go love thy brother up to God.
>
> Of this great trinity no part deny,
> Affirm, affirm the Great Eternal I.
>
> When the great universe was wrought
> To might and majesty from naught,
> The all creative force was—
> *Thought*

III

"The most fundamental fact in human activity is the push of personality seeking the gratification of desires." That is the heart of an imposing tome by Frank Channing Haddock. It makes perfectly clear the present-day

preoccupations of the New Thought advocates, particularly as these concern the great unwashed throng who make up the bulk of the movement's votaries. Even the therapeutic message of the movement has diminished in recent years; its theology is the property of a few vigorous and independent writers. What the whole affair now amounts to is getting personality and wealth by the shortest possible circuit. It preaches what Gaius Glenn Atkins dubs the Gospel of Getting On. Of this Gospel Orison Swett Marden and his like have written both the new testament and the acts of the apostles. Marden's titles are sufficient: *The Victorious Life, He Can Who Thinks He Can, The Victorious Attitude, Self-Investment, Be Good to Your Self.*

In getting wealth, happiness and charm, the process is really just as simple as that of curing constipation. Julia Seton Sears, in *The Key to Health, Wealth and Love,* says it can be done "simply by getting the interior attitude of seeing, feeling and being opulent." Mrs. Genevieve Behrend, tells how she attracted twenty thousand dollars to her in six weeks so that she might go to sit at the feet of Troward.[5] Mrs. Behrend does not tell how she actually got the money but tells of making mental pictures of twenty one-thousand-dollar bills until one day she was bathed with joy, and that night her picture showed an avenue for acquiring the money.

The New Thought has been defined by Elizabeth Towne, who began with thirty dollars capital and has built up an enormous plant at Holyoke, Massachusetts, as "the fine art of recognizing, realizing, and manifesting the God in the individual." She herself has been relentlessly engaged in this holy work since 1896, radiating Truth and Sunbeams monthly through her psychic organ, *Nautilus.* She writes books on *Just How to Wake Up The Solar Plexus, Just How To Concentrate* and *Just How To Cook Meals Without Meat.* For almost a generation her journal has been carrying on. . . . In 1908 *Nautilus* carried the announcement of C. D. Lar-

[5] See Thomas Troward, *The Edinburgh Lectures on Mental Science,* (New York, 1913). These lectures have given The New Thought its greatest dignity.

son's book, *The Great Within*. One of the chapter titles was, "How To Train Your Subconscious Mind To Work Out Your Problems While You Are Asleep."

Mrs. Towne's editorials are always confidential talks, filled with such advice as "Your real trouble is that you lack self-confidence." Almost invariably they take the form of talks to some distressed subscriber. One is addressed to The Quiet Girl Who Doesn't Make Friends Easily:

> You have all the qualities of a social success. All you need to do is to let your light shine, let your loving kindness radiate to everybody with whom you come in contact.

As a formula for making friends, she gives this affirmation:

> Every man I meet is my brother who has just found me; we rejoice in each other, we smile at each other, we ask questions of each other, we express ourselves frankly to each other in truth, we glorify each other and are proud and happy in our equality and divinity and in the difference of our humanity. We are glad to be alive and to get acquainted!
> I am lovingkindness, and I express it freely, happily.

To the sad-eyed, inadequate, care-worn peasantry, the words of *Nautilus* are addressed, bearing monthly the message that everybody's God. To a man in a London hospital, Mrs. Towne writes:

> God is in his heaven within you. You are His perfect son in a perfect world NOW. Let go the outer world and KNOW Him within. LET Go and let God work in you, through you, blessing all the world. . . . Spend your time BLESSING all the world, actively. Get busy ACTIVELY BLESSING everybody.

Mrs. Towne has a cure for everything. She writes more books than anyone save H. G. Wells. One deals with *How To Grow Successful* and claims to "make you Dollarative where you were merely Centsitive before." She gets as many letters as the School of Silent Unity, most of which relate to success in producing happiness or charm. Success letter No. 1047 published in *Nautilus* tells how

> I DEMONSTRATED A MATE AND HEALED MYSELF OF DEAFNESS WHICH THE DOCTOR SAID WAS INCURABLE

The desire of this woman was for an appropriate companion and a home of her own. She once had a dream of tacking down a green carpet. A little later chance had it that she began keeping company with a young man of her ideals. Not long after that she married this young man and they actually had a little green carpet in their home. As for the ear, why "I visioned a sound ear every morning and evening, and in less than six months I was fully restored."

Another subscriber to the Four Lesson Course offered by Mrs. Towne says:

> The first two lessons have really made a new woman of me. I have demonstrated a sale of property where it was impossible to sell an acre. And I found a new home as I visualized and asked for.

The business done by *Nautilus* is mostly financial and spiritual. It heals fewer than it enriches. Mrs. Towne operates on a basis which the churches of the orthodox fold would do well to emulate. Every message is transmitted through the printed word. Books cure. A letter directed to her brought in reply one copy of *Nautilus* (retail price, $.20), one multigraphed letter telling that the secret of success is Will Power and offering *Nautilus* and two pamphlets for $1.40, and a book list affording the convert a chance to buy $163.42 worth of books.

One would expect to find all sorts of fakirs flocking to the standards of such an enterprise, preying upon its credulous victims. The advertisement carried by *Nautilus* evidence the kind who read and advertise. Thus one man makes this bold command:

> DON'T PAY ME A CENT IF I CAN'T GIVE
> YOU A MAGNETIC PERSONALITY
> *5 Days Free Proof*
>
> I can give you charm that makes you irresistibly popular, personal power that will indelibly influence the mind of your friends and amaze others.

The same advertisement goes on to discuss the question, "What is sex magnetism?" and promises that any boney

hoyden may have the "it" of Salome in a fortnight. Another shouts:

BECOME A DOCTOR OF BIO-PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHO-ANALYSIS

Wherever there are people in mental, physical, or soul distress, there is lucrative practice for our graduates. The returns of the first client have in many cases been larger than the price of the whole course. We guarantee that in this course you will find the key to health, progress the success. Dr. Taylor's $25 character analysis given free to each student.

Brown Landone reveals in *The Silence Which Creates,* "how to use it to create a new heaven and a new earth for yourself." "By *not* listening to The Silence Which Creates, I lost an opportunity of making $22,000 in 1923; then by *heeding* The Silence Which Creates, I increased my net equity in real estate 300% during the next two years." Remit $4.68.

Another broadside has for its heading, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. It quotes the words of Christ to this effect: "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive them, and ye shall have them." Following that is this opulent version of the lowly man of Galilee:

Jesus Himself wore good clothes, ate good food, and went where and when he willed. The comforts and luxuries of some of the best homes of Jerusalem and other towns and cities were his when ever he chose to avail himself of them, and among his friends were many men and women of wealth.

This same concern issues another Scriptural tableau, headed MIRACLES. Its design shows water being poured out of the upper left corner and becoming wine in a jar beneath; on the other side disappointment is being poured into a jar called "realized desires." The advertisement itself promises that

After all other means have failed,
we teach people how to perform
MIRACLES
of Healing, Success, Achievement, Love,
and Happiness.

An idea of the articles consumed each month by avid godlets is afforded through the following excerpt from an analysis by one Thomas Boyd Parker:

> A Psychological Trouble Shooter tones up the human machine. He looks first at your "gas" as to quality and quantity. Maybe your piston rods are worn and "leak." Maybe it is a faulty carburetor. You are not a good mixer.

He proceeds to list five columns of Christian virtues and ends by advising his readers: "Claim for yourself every good quality you see in others." These articles are for the most part paragraphed in the manner of Glenn Frank:

> If we ourselves believe this, we will live it!
> If we do not, we take an anti-Christ attitude.

I have cited so much banality in order that I might show how the New Thought actually works, once it gets going among the solid citizenry. Its whigmaleeries are perfectly sound so long as they remain the property of a few skilled writers who talk convincingly in terms of practical metaphysics. But once they are shared—as the New Thought insists upon sharing them—with the halt, the maimed, the blind and the botched, we have a religion of high-pressure advertising and cures by parcel post. The New Thought, perhaps more than any other faith of today, is the religion of the People. It supplies by return mail what most of us want—harmony and prosperity. It offers the pleasures of life for a thought, and that it has attracted the devotion of millions of Americans need not astonish us. It is the Correspondence School of the Soul—America's distinctive contribution to the faiths of mankind.

IX

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

I

THE most that can be said for Christian Science is that it has invested drugless healing with blue lights and incense. That, I believe, is a statement which can be borne out by the facts, and if it can, it explains a lot. It explains, for one thing, why the followers of Mary Baker Glover Patterson Eddy have secured an inflexible hold upon the dupes of the commonwealth, and why the wealth and vigorous influence of the theocracy the sainted woman left have not been equalled among modern religious cults. It explains, too, why she attained apotheosis in her last earthly days, why thousands of her devoted students made annual pilgrimages to the shrine she erected at Pleasantview, Concord, and why she travelled in state when she travelled at all, with a pilot engine in front and another to protect the rear of her special train. And it explains, too, the envy of the rest of Christendom, an envy which has expressed iself in venomous attacks and villification. She taught us how to make healing a sacred process, and in so doing put the great number of Christian denominations to appropriate shame.

If we may put an age in a sentence, it is this: Mesmer, disenchanted German that he was, wrested the privilege of healing from the Churches; Mother Eddy, devout and God-fearing American that she was, restored it. That, with due allowance made for the process of discovery and interpretation, is the whole story of Christian Science.

When Mary Baker Glover Patterson went first to Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, I have it on no less authority

than her biographer, Sybil Wilbur, she went expecting to see a God-man, and not the earthly satyr and ignorant blacksmith that she found.[1] And when, because of her intense faith in his powers, she was miraculously healed of an ailment which had made her an invalid since childhood, she saw at once that it was the work of God; and she tried immediately to get Quimby to see the same divinity in it. It is, I think, unfair to say that Mother Eddy pirated Quimby's method, though Mark Twain and a great many smarter men than I have said just that. The truth is that she dressed Quimby's system in cassock—she spiritualized his mesmerism and made Christianity out of his practice. That was her contribution. She was one of those queer people who persist in seeing God in everything—lightning, stones, brooks, and whatnot. She could understand no phenomenon apart from its origin in the divine. Hence, when she arose from Quimby's couch and ascended the hundred and eighty-two steps of the City Hall in Portland to demonstrate her recovery, she was convinced—and nothing could change her mind—she was convinced that she had been cured by the direct intervention of Almighty God.

Because of the scandals that blew like a hurricane through the later years of her life, because of the frequent and well founded charges that she was avaricious and domineering, we have lost sight of the one fact which explains Christian Science in terms of its founder. She was a vigorously and tediously religious woman. It was not by accident that, as revealed by the most recently suppressed documents, her last years were spent in unearthly fear of mental assassins, of malignant spiritual forces which she believed worked as viciously against her as they had against her last husband shortly before his death. She was a woman who believed whole-heartedly in spiritual entities. A child of devout and God-fearing parents, she was for forty years a faithful member of the Congregational Church, from which she withdrew to found her own. "From my very early childhood," she declares, "I was impelled, by hunger and thirst after divine

[1] Sybil Wilbur, *The Life of Mary Baker Eddy* (Boston, 1913), p. 90.

things," to seek God where she might find him. Her father had the feeling that her brain was too large for her, so he kept her out of school and tutored her at home. Miss Wilbur tells us that on cold nights she would go out and cuddle down by the side of her father's pig pens, praying God to keep the pigs warm and happy.

Mary's childhood must not be passed over lightly. Her father was a man of childish temper and perverse mind, and all of his children were headstrong and high-tempered. Early in life Mary was released from the ordinary discipline of the home because of the nervous fits to which she was given with increasing violence and frequency. It became the chief concern of the household to avoid these storms of hysteria. In form they resembled convulsions. Mary would fall headlong to the floor, "writhing and screaming in apparent agony." Again she would drop as if lifeless and would lie limp and motionless until restored. At other times she would become rigid and cataleptic and was for a time in a state of suspended animation.[2]

In these states she was the object of solicitous care. Her father put straw and bark in front of the house and on a nearby bridge to avoid noise from the passing of wagons. Later her second husband, Dr. Daniel Patterson, a roving dentist, spent a great part of his evenings killing frogs who persisted in croaking along a neighbouring brook. She soon reached a stage where she had to be rocked to sleep. This job usually fell to the hired man and was first achieved in a large hammock and later in a cradle especially constructed for the purpose. She had an intense pathological desire for swinging. On other occasions it was necessary to walk the floor with her as with a squalling baby or to send for old Boston John Clark, the mesmerist, to quiet her.

Obviously she was an extraordinarily sensitive child, and it is credible that her sympathies extended even to the pigs on her father's farm. Lingering acquaintances in her old home, according to Milmine, testify that at

[2] Georgine Milmine, *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy and the History of Christian Science* (New York, 1909), pp. 12, 21.

fifteen she was a delicate and somewhat attractive girl who was given over to the practice of showing off. She used many words, the longer and more unusual the better, "and her application and pronunciation of them was always original." She was always vain and always extremely careful of her attire—a habit which never deserted her. She says in *Retrospection and Introspection* that her brother Albert taught her Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. But the neighbours say that he entered college when Mary was nine and left home when she was thirteen. Her early days are reported to have been filled with the same type of spiritual experiences which marked the pubescence of Emanuel Swedenborg, Mother Ann Lee,[3] the Bab, and others who have in adulthood called disciples. When about eight, she says, she heard a voice calling her distinctly by name, three times, in an ascending scale. The parallel with the experience of the calling of the child Samuel was patent to her, but little remains to show that she had anything in childhood but nervous fits.

Her abnormalities continued up to the time she met Phineas Quimby. Her first husband died soon after their marriage, and a posthumous child was born. She married again, this time to Dr. Patterson, the dentist, who took his bride in the face of warning issued by her father. He had to carry her down the stairs to the wedding and back up to her bed when it was all over. He had also to carry her cradle to their new home, and his services were in demand the moment he returned from his excursions in search of practice.

It was after years of suffering and nervousness that she first heard of the marvel of the day, "Dr." Quimby. His fame had travelled throughout provincial New England and Mrs. Patterson determined that she would see him. Her husband wrote, imploring him to call upon his invalid wife, and when he replied that he could not come,

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[3] In childhood Mrs. Eddy knew of the colony of Shakers five miles from her home and lived among people who remembered Mother Ann. It is easy to exaggerate the similarities between the Shakers and certain Christian Science customs. The Shakers prayed to Our Father and Mother which are in Heaven, the Scientists to Our Father-Mother God. Both called their founder Mother, both forbade audible prayer, and both emphasized celibacy.

the destined founder of Christian Science used her wits to reach him. For the first time in her life she had found an absorbing interest.

Quimby, it is well agreed among Christian Scientists, was no more religious than William Marcy Tweed. He cured by hypnotism, and in a manner which I have described elsewhere. That he actually cured Mrs. Patterson, as she was at that time, is admitted by all save one biographer, who neglects, among other details, to mention one of Mrs. Eddy's husbands. He wrought a spell of hypnotism, says Miss Wilbur, "and under that suggestion she let go the burden of pain just as she would have done had morphine been administered. The relief was no doubt tremendous. Her gratitude was certainly unbounded. She was set free from the excruciating pain of years." [4] Here was a perfectly obvious case of hypnotism, a feat which astonished the experienced Quimby not a little. Yet it never occurred to him that the Lord might be in the affair. Next day, however, when Mrs. Patterson returned, she said to him: "You have no need to touch me, nor disorder my hair with your mesmeric passes." For, in her often expressed judgment, Quimby's work was of the Lord. He was able to cure, she told him, "by your knowledge of God's law, your understanding of the truth which Christ brought into the world and which has been lost for ages." Quimby is reported to have said: "I see what you mean. Christ has come into the world again; but in that case I must be John and you Jesus." This [5] Mother Patterson thought was blasphemous; and, too, it denoted that obtuseness to spiritual reality which she felt characterized all of Quimby's mental labours during the time she worked with him.

The fact that Mrs. Eddy made use of materials already at her command has caused, it seems to me, needless embarrassment to the proponents of the faith. Certainly Christianity had its Judaism, and Bahaism its Babism. That she charged Quimbyism with religious fervour is adequate contribution for the old lady to have

[4] Wilbur, *op. cit.*, p. 90.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 96.

made. Yet the whole history of Christian Science has been marked by subterfuge and concealment and hedging whenever the name of Quimby is mentioned. Quimby is despised and regarded as a monstrous vulgar fellow, whereas Mary Baker Eddy is worshipped for her sweet charms and high spiritual insight. The truth is that Quimby was no more vulgar than Mrs. Eddy was a seer of divine truth. Quimby experimented with patients and cured them by hypnotism. Mary Baker Eddy made a cult of the whole affair. A cult is a body of believers grouped around an idea that works, an idea generally revealed by a prophet, set forth in sacred oracles, and preserved by reverence, piety, and the authority of the governing body. But on with the story. Mrs. Patterson insisted, as I have said, that Quimby healed her by some divine power. This power she was aware of but he did not understand. She therefore tried to enlighten him, so Christian Science tradition has it. And he, the tradition further has it, was eager to take advantage of her superior mental qualifications and heard her gladly. She remained in Portland, Maine, where the cure was effected, for three weeks, and saw Quimby every day during that time. She told him, with her hankering for phrases and oracles, that his method should be philosophically stated, so that it would stand like the Rock of Ages. To this Quimby readily agreed. "He did not contradict her; on the contrary, he adopted both her language and her ideas"; which is by no means improbable, for it is said that Mrs. Patterson had studied moral science, whatever that is, as a girl, and that she was a serious, argumentative, and thoughtful woman. Quimby was flattered by the interpretation which she put on his work. She encouraged him to write out some of his ideas, which he consented to do. They proved, however, a mere jumble of idiocies, so Miss Wilbur says, and Mrs. Patterson, good woman that she was, consented to state his postulates for him.

Here began the Quimby manuscript "tradition," and the tradition had further life when these manscripts were published by Dresser in 1921 and have, for some curious, undiscovered, but easily guessed, reason, never been heard

of since. The Christian Science side has it that Mrs. Patterson wrote in 1862 and again in 1864 certain manuscripts for Quimby, "to which she unselfishly and unguardedly signed his name. These manuscripts, in Mrs. Eddy's handwriting, interlined with Quimby's emendations, may still be in existence." [6] At this time Mrs. Patterson had no thought of founding a cult, though she did have the feeling of discovering a new approach to Christianity and the hankering for a philosophic statement of this new approach. She was just now taken up with domestic cares. Upon returning home she got her husband released from a Confederate prison. He had gone to a battlefield as a spectator and had been captured, and now he was in the hoosegow. He seemed little disposed to take up his dental practice again, or his domestic relations. He much preferred to drift about from village to village telling of the thrills he had gotten out of the war and of the torment he had suffered while a prisoner. The net result was worry for his wife. In the state superinduced by the husband's rovings, she approached illness again, and, in perfect proof of her confidence in him, went again upon a pilgrimage to Phineas Parkhurst Quimby, the ignorant and obtuse mesmerist who contained so large a spark of divine power.

During this second stay, which was in 1864, she went frequently to his office, trying all the while to persuade him to group his thoughts into a logical syllogism. As for her evenings, says Miss Wilbur, they were spent "in the attempt to harmonize his notions with her own spiritual ideas." She stayed at this time with a certain Mrs. Crosby, and Mrs. Crosby has said, and the statement is quoted in the official Life of the priestess, that "Mrs. Patterson laboured long into the night at her writing."

She now made a final effort to give her husband the society he needed. She had, with the charm which was hers and remained hers until her death—and even then the New York *Herald* reported she was a beautiful and well preserved corpse—a chance to move in good society, were it not for her dreadful, boorish husband. He roved

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

about New England towns, staying at farmhouses and smiting the womenfolk of the rural places with his frock coat, silk hat, kid boots, and gloves. He had, Miss Wilbur declares, "a silly vanity in his powers of fascination over equally silly and romantic women." In the end this silly vanity got the better of him, for he deserted his wife and ran off with the wife of a prominent citizen who had engaged his professional services. Like Mother Ann Lee, Mrs. Patterson was left almost penniless and alone in the world, though she was never reduced to vinegar. She had friends, and she lived about from house to house, always getting into controversies over her doctrines. In due course the wife of the wealthy citizen came back and Mrs. Patterson forgave her. Then her husband came, but she did not forgive him. He left her, continued his roving, and died a hermit in New England.

At this time, however, she still felt that there was hope for him, and with a view to getting him into good society, joined the Linwood Lodge of the Good Templars, hoping that its refining influence would make a gentleman of him. And by this ruse she profited, if not directly, certainly enough indirectly. She was frequently called upon to address the assembled circle, and here she began to get her training in the art she later mastered. Her ability was swiftly recognized and in less time than it takes to tell it, she was made presiding officer of the Legion of Honour, which was the woman's branch of the organization. She got here her first experience in leadership and organization. Whether there were any similarities between the Legion of Honour and the Mother Church, the historians are not in a position to say, but the fact remains and stands out that the woman who founded Christian Science got her start in a lodge.

Just now, too, her literary being was fast taking shape. She frequently burst into song, and the results were printed, along with poems of Whittier and Holmes, in the local press. The Civil War was drawing to a close, and she had the blood of heroes in her veins. It was only natural then that many of her poems were sheer outbursts of patriotic feeling. She was not a slacker and she sang

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Mary Baker G. Eddy

From a tintype given to Mrs. Sarah G. Crosby in 1864
Mrs. Eddy was then Mrs. Patterson

proudly and feelingly of the brave men at the front.

At this point Christian Science may be said to have begun. One evening while returning home from the Legion of Honour with a group of friends, she slipped on the icy pavement, and much to the alarm of her companions, fell heavily—she weighed ninety pounds—to the pavement. Unconscious, she was carried to the home of a gentleman near by, and, unconscious, she allowed a doctor to be summoned. He administered a third decimal attenuation of arnica, which she took in a semi-conscious state. He left her on Friday and the miracle occurred on Sunday. Her friends had gathered about to watch her pass away. She called for a Bible and asked them to leave the room. She read the ninth chapter of the Gospel According to St. Matthew, containing the story of the man sick with the palsy. As she read it, there came over her a sudden and overwhelming realization of the power of Christ to save. She felt herself instantaneously cured, arose, dressed herself, and entered the room where her astonished friends were assembled. The miracle which she performed on herself just then she later found "to be in perfect accord with divine law." Her discovery, in the judgment of Christian Science historians, is to be compared in importance and significance to the discovery Newton made when the apple fell and Watt made when he saw the boiling kettle. It was the real beginning of Christian Science, it was the discovery of the lost chord of truth. She did more than experience a cure. "She in that hour received a revelation for which she had been preparing her heart in every event of her life." [7]

II

Her friends, convinced at first, became suspicious. Even her relatives seemed doubtful of the wisdom involved in the sudden walking of a woman who had shortly before received serious internal injuries. They attacked her equilibrium with their adulterated thoughts, and she felt

[7] Wilbur, p. 131.

herself weakening. Where could she turn? Her old friend Quimby was dead. Besides, he was an ignorant mesmerist and she now had authentic revelation that healing came from heaven and worked in accord with spiritual laws. None the less, her confidence in the mesmerist remained, and though he had passed on, she wrote to Dresser, Quimby's friend and confidant, asking for his help in continuing Quimby's work. In saying that Quimby was dead, Miss Wilbur has it that he "could not longer obtrude his unformulated theories between her mind and its own spirtual aspirations." [8] None the less, she seemed to want just that, and wrote to Dresser, asking him if he could not help her in her hour of need. As we have seen elsewhere, Dresser declined, saying that he did not feel able to resume the work which Quimby had laid down.

The consequence was that Mrs. Patterson (still her name), was thrown upon her own by the fall. "She was forced to turn to God." And there Christian Science began: in the mind of a competent woman who, as long as her saviour lived, was content to formulate her own version of his philosophy, but who, when he was dead, had self-reliance and presence of mind enough to make the mare go by her own energy and rulership. Dresser, of course, reminded her in later years that she had turned to him before she turned to God. To which she replied, and with some truth if not with great tact, "After the death of the so-called originator of mental healing it required ten years of nameless experience for me to reach the standpoint of my first edition of *Science and Health.*"

These ten years began at once. To mark their auspicious opening, Dr. Patterson ran off with another woman in the manner that I have described. It was the happy signal for complete renunciation. She determined that she would never again write for fame or money, that she would devote herself monastically to the great cause before her. She must discover the *modus operandi* of the miracle she had wrought. Her family provided her with some money, and for the next nine years she lived about from house to house. Indeed, she might be said to have

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 135.

had no place to lay her head. And if the analogy be pushed further, as it often is, the miracles she performed in that period makes the chronicle of it read like a chapter from the Gospel according to Luke. Her first cure—and I find no record of her performing cures before the great experience referred to above—was the cure of a bone felon on the finger of a child. Another was the cure of a rich young man in a fever, who was transformed into peace and health by the mere hand of Mary Baker Glover, as her name now was, upon his brow. His parents came to get him at once, however, and took him to Boston. She nowhere got credit for her work. Even the beneficiaries of her powers were suspicious of them, and friends whom she benefitted were often alienated rather than grappled to her breast with hoops of steel.

She was known at this time as a woman of peculiar religious views at which people often laughed. In the social circles which she had almost reached by her work in the Legion of Honour, she was not popular. She effected cures among the wealthy, but they were indifferent to her doctrines. Just now the cultured were not to be her field. She came to her own and her own received her not. She was therefore forced to turn for the first disciples to the poorer class of people in Lynn. Her first active disciple was a shoemaker, and many of those who followed came from the factories at Lynn. Hiram Crafts was the name of the first. To feed the soul of this shoemaker she wrote out certain manuscripts, "not entirely different from those she had prepared for Quimby. She still believed that Quimby had shared the truth of divine healing with her, but her writings were now based entirely upon her own experiences." Crafts, under her instruction, became sufficiently adept in the cult of healing to make a good living and effect a number of startling cures over the period of his labours. He showed such aptitude, in fact, that Mrs. Patterson concluded to go and live with him. This was a radical move, for it meant forsaking the cultured class and approaching the groundlings. But her duty was clear. She carted her things to his house; there she tutored him with great care and spent much time in

writing. He set up a practice, cured a prominent woman of an abscess and got much good publicity out of it. Everything, it would appear, was running smoothly. But there was Crafts' wife, who rather resented the idea of playing Martha to this woman and did not take long in making her resentment known. The presence of a superior woman in the house irked her; besides, this woman was not contributing dollars and cents to her support, and this went hard against the grain of Mrs. Crafts' New England thrift. She did not like to perform menial tasks about the place while this woman held long and fervent conversations with her husband, and before anything very promising came of the first disciple, Mrs. Eddy concluded that she had better move. One thing she had gained, however. That was the conviction that she could impart an understanding of the *modus operandi* of the new philosophy to her fellows. She could not only cure. She could teach others how to cure, and that was a discovery not to be underrated. Accordingly, she packed her things and pulled out, convinced that all her philosophy now needed was a scientific statement.

The significance of the next few years—the formative years of *Science and Health*—"can be indicated only with the most reverent suggestion. . . . The work laid before her was that of renaming, actually rechristening, the verities." [9] That, it seems to me, is the best appraisal of what Mother Eddy actually did. And the appraisal comes from her most devoted biographer. The founder began now to work diligently upon the Scriptures. She sought to see their spiritual meaning, and not the mere significance which the words themselves have. She prepared a long and fulsome commentary on the verses, interpreting each in the light of her discovery. Nothing escaped her until it had been discovered to reveal deep layers of unsuspected truth. During these years her movement from house to house continued, to an almost pathetic degree. "It was to the simple-minded that she was con-

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 166–167.

strained to address herself." The Spiritualists seemed most amenable to the reception of truth and she spent much time among them, both to show the error of their ways and the superiority of the faith that was all the while taking form in her mind. During the course of her rovings she visited Sarah Bagley, whom she taught the art of mental healing. Sarah practised this with great profit for twenty years, though she was never a Christian Scientist. She did not follow her teacher out of the maze into "the bright light of complete understanding." She refused to lay aside mesmerism and she steadfastly and stupidly confused her practice with such doctrines.

And that was a fate which befell many of the early disciples of Mother Eddy. They were for ever taking up her art and forgetting her sacred theology. This was a fatal mistake—not always, to be sure, attended by fatal consequences—but it cast serious reflection upon her and showed conclusively the error of their ways. Some, as was the case with Sarah Bagley, continued the practice of mesmerism with great success, but they were not admitted to the sacred circles and Mrs. Eddy never failed to express her great dissatisfaction with such methods and the disparity between them and the real Simon pure Gospel of the new religion. This, I believe, accounts as much as anything else for the tragical fear which haunted her in old age, the fear of Malicious Animal Magnetism, which, taking her cue from Revelation 13, she called the Red Dragon. Throughout her thinking and her teaching she was compelled to point out and insist rigidly upon the difference between merely healing and healing the divinely approved way. Her greatest enemy was not sickness, but the practitioner who could meet sickness by drugless methods other than her own. She had the same contempt for them that the Church at large has for a "moral man." Just as evangelists hawk salvation by the Blood of the Lamb as the only adequate guarantee of a good life, she was compelled to hawk healing by Christian Science as the only thoroughly safe way of curing the sick. And, it was inevitable that she should come to

despise and attribute maliciousness to the methods which took no account of her doctrine but all account in the world of her practice.

She started a small class with Sarah Bagley, and it numbered one who came to play a prominent part in the rumpus which shook her household of faith a few years later. The young man's name was Richard Kennedy. He was a pimply youth with some competence, whom the teacher regarded as an apt and promising student of the new doctrine. She was of course forced to take what she could get in the way of promise, for her prospects thus far lay among the uneducated and simple-minded of the populace. When the time came for her to move upon Lynn and there establish a class of instruction, Kennedy begged his benefactor to be allowed to go. Mrs. Glover saw at once the dangers of taking a lad of twenty-five to the city. She warned him of the great temptations of the world, saying that he would be sorely tried. Would it be possible for him to stand it all? Could he be spiritually minded? Yes, he felt he could. They arrived in Lynn, and Kennedy took up the managerial duties for the new school. They rented sleeping rooms together on the second floor of a private school, and there the labourers from shoe factories assembled each week to receive instruction in the art and artifice of mental healing. Tuition paid by these workers amounted, thus far, to only a hundred dollars for three weeks' indoctrination. On the whole the course was exceedingly popular, and it was not long before the young factory hands were performing miracles with great zest and success throughout the community. But here the spectre of mesmerism began to show itself. It stalked like a shadow in the wake of the divinely inspired teacher, threatening to tear to pieces the good work that was done. One young man's pride and self-sufficiency made him an apostate. He wrote from Knoxville, Tennessee, that he had been practising nothing but mesmerism and that it would be deceitful to call it anything else. His practice and success at once declined. Invariably the potency of the practitioner is said to have passed when he allowed

himself to think that it was only hypnotism that he practised. In view of the dire circumstances which began to arise, Mrs. Glover forbade the use of hands or physical manipulation among her students. She could show them, once and for all, and quite conclusively that there was no relation between the cure by divine law and the cure by mental suggestion with physical manipulation and mesmeric passes.

The trouble began with the disaffection of Kennedy. He had, as a matter of fact, been somewhat popular with the ladies, and had gotten into high social circles in the city of Lynn. As a pupil, he had been a disappointment. Mrs. Glover had expounded the inscrutable to him more carefully than to any other *chela*. But alas! she finally saw that he was a mere mesmerist, as sadly lacking in spiritual comprehension as the late lamented Phineas Parkhurst Quimby. He could, benighted soul, see no difference between Christian Science and mesmerism. He had counterfeited her Science—an unforgivable act. He continued throughout a long career, practising by physical manipulation and a vigorous rubbing of the head, becoming one of the fathers of modern osteopathy. His success only showed how quickly God sometimes allows evil to flourish. And it showed Mary Baker Glover that the time for her textbook on authentic Christian Science had struck. There was grave need of some oracle which should voice cogently and forthrightly the true Science and brand as a fraud every other method which simulated it. She asked, then, that her students give up physical manipulation, and she settled down in 1872 to put the blessed last touches upon that volume which she was to call *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. Mesmeric practice therefore became branded as immoral—meaning that it was contrary to the ideas of the founder of true Christian Science.

From 1873 to 1875 she worked assiduously on her *chef-d'œuvre*. Her divorce from Dr. Patterson was secured in 1873, and it must have been with greater peace of mind that she laboured after that. When it was all finished, one of her pupils, George Clark by name, carted the manu-

script off to the publishers in Boston. It was promptly turned down, upon the sound basis that it would not sell. A sea story, which Clark carried to the same publishers at the same time, was accepted and did sell. Mother Eddy was savagely disappointed, yet she concealed her wrath against a greater day. Upon Clark's return, they took a walk through the streets of Lynn, and Mrs. Glover, seeing prophetically what was yet to come to pass, pointed to a church and said: "I shall have a church of my own some day."

Only the prospectus of the book had been declined. Before its completion she set about among her students raising funds with which to swing it privately. Everywhere, discussion, controversy, and ridicule pursued her. She needed a refuge, a sanctuary in which to make the words she had written ring with divine sentiment. It was this need which led her to purchase, for fifty-six hundred dollars, a house on Broad Street, Lynn, later made famous by the dissensions that arose there. She moved in, did her writing in the attic, and hung out her sign for students. A small and devoted class soon assembled in the parlor downstairs, and here the basis was laid both for the publication of her book and for the establishment of the Mother Church. Many remarkable cures are said to have been effected by the students there, and the class, composed mostly of workers from the shoe factories, grew by leaps and bounds. A fund was subscribed for what later became the notorious first edition of *Science and Health,* and the manuscript was dispatched to a private printer. It was in the upper room of this house, on the wall of which there hung the words, "Thou shalt have no other God before me," that Mary Baker Glover completed her Writ.

Admittedly there have been many sharp criticisms of *Science and Health,* and there have also been many changes in it since that first edition. But that first edition, whatever its imperfections, "holds, like the Grail, that receptacle in which the wine was given to the disciples, the verities of Christian Science." What changes were made is difficult to say. Obviously Mrs. Glover had

something to say of animal magnetism, and obviously she had something to say of Phineas P. Quimby. But the church authorities, with the sharp surveillance of the Roman See, have kept guard over the first editions, and Chaldeans are not permitted to know. Mark Twain wrote at the time that the sainted book was a hodgepodge of unrelated tomfoolery, that he couldn't understand it "and would rather saw wood" than try. He added to the foregoing the further conviction that Mother Eddy didn't even write it.

What she herself thought of the book can be seen by the following:

> The works I have written on Christian Science contain absolute Truth. . . . I was a scribe under orders, and who can refrain from transcribing what God indites? [10]

And if this affirmation leaves anyone in doubt of the feeling which, at least in later life, she entertained about her own inspiration, I offer the following:

> I should blush to write of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* as I have, were it of human origin, and I, apart from God, its author; but as I was only a scribe echoing the harmonies of heaven in divine metaphysics, I cannot be super-modest of the Christian Science text book.[11]

These words were written in a day of prosperity and authority when the devotees of the cult expected her to make asseverations of great pith and moment. In the days when the book was actually printed, however, she doubtless felt more nearly super-modest about it. For the first edition didn't sell in those days—however priceless it would be today. What is more, the Broad Street house, where the book was completed, soon became "a theatre of intense mental disturbance." Whether the incident had any casual relation, I cannot say, but the tuition was increased in 1875 from one hundred to three hundred dollars, for a course lasting less than three weeks. God impelled her to make this change, although some effort was made to get the cup to pass from her. "I shrank from

[10] Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings* (Boston, 1896), p. 331.
[11] Christian Science *Journal*, January, 1901.

asking it," she writes, "but was finally led, by a strange providence, to accept this fee. God has since shown me in multitudinous ways, the wisdom of this decision. . . ." [12]

III

Within a short time betrayers arose to hound her labours. She had, not one Judas, but many—all of the ungrateful wretches who did not grasp her true philosophy and ran off about the country practising her art without teaching her doctrine. Strangely, or inevitably, as you choose, the rumpus was started when Asa G. Eddy entered the house on Broad Street. He was a bachelor living in East Boston, where had been the agent of a sewing machine company. He had been in bad health and common friends had prevailed upon him to make a visit to Mrs. Glover. She received him cordially, and saw that here was, every inch, a gentleman. He was kind and unobtrusive, and had one not known the truth, one might have thought him to be lacking in strong character. Mrs. Glover was not misled, however, for she quickly cured him of his ailment and lined him up in the active work of her class. As time passed she began to place more and more responsibility in his hands. Mrs. Glover was in no way satisfied with the way in which her book was selling. A young man named George Barry was her sales manager. She thought it wise to relieve him of his studies and put a young man named Daniel H. Spofford in charge of the sales of the book. Spofford could undoubtedly have done a better job. He had been a watchmaker and a sailor before he began taking a course in science and health. He had gotten hold of some of her manuscripts from other students, had copied them and mastered the art of healing, but missed the inner point of the doctrine and tried to establish mental healing on his own hook. Mrs. Glover sent for him to come to see her, with the result that she lined him up with the class, and he became for a time one of her most devoted workers. At the time she wanted

[12] *Retrospection and Introspection*, p. 50.

him to take over the book he had built up a rather opulent practice of his own in Lynn.

After he assumed his new job, the question next arose, What should become of Spofford's excellent practice? To which she replied without hesitation that it should be handed over without cavil to Mr. Asa G. Eddy. What effect this had upon a crowd of young men and women from the shoe factories assembled by miracles and held together by a bond of affection can easily be guessed. Barry at once began to sulk and kick. Spofford went into a rage. The girls who had tried to aid in selling the book from house to house felt insulted by the new arrangement. On the whole it looked as though the whole band of disciples might be scattered any moment.

It was just here that Mrs. Glover made one of her most strategic moves. In the very midst of a war of petty jealousies and recriminations, she married the cause of it all. For some strange reason this had a palliative effect, and the war temporarily ceased. The students gave the bride and bridegroom a party, playing ring around the rosey and declaring their allegiance to their teacher. Mrs. Glover spoke to them very gravely, and by her remarks and the work of the next few days, they saw that she regarded the marriage merely as a spritual union, and her newly acquired husband as one of the students who must work here like all the rest to put over the cause of Christian Science.

Her influence was temporary, however, and soon the storm broke again. Thereafter one typhoon followed hard upon another. George Barry brought suit to recover twenty-seven hundred dollars for services which he said he had performed over a period of five years. He got two hundred and fifty dollars for his pains, probably spoiling his case by listing such items as fifty cents for carrying up a bucket of coal to his teacher. But the scandal got out, and the papers, on the eve of developing their strong modern scent for news, were avid for details. The group began to be notorious, and what followed stamped them as outrageous. Whatever the ground for it, the charge was noised abroad that Mrs. Eddy, as we shall now call her,

had inspired and authorized her students to assemble and concentrate upon Kennedy, Spofford, Barry and other apostles to do them mental injury. This seemed credible enough. Here again adventitious ideas and interpretations popped up to bark at patient Mother Eddy. She had congregated shoemakers from the factories of Lynn and sought to teach them philosophic idealism with spiritual implications: it was not surprising that they soon began to believe in witches.

The trouble was precipitated by Lucretia Brown of Ipswich, who brought suit against Spofford for hoodooing her. She swore before the local grand jury that the Mephistopheles had wrought bodily harm upon her by his mental machinations, and she sought to have the court restrain him from his naughty practices. Neuralgia and diabetes were among the complaints which she alleged Spofford had brought upon her by his debilitating mental attacks.

The case was called in Salem, where witches had been disposed of with proper dispatch two hundred years before. Arens, a student of Mrs. Eddy's, argued the case for the girl, and though her biographer asserts that she had nothing to do with the plan of the case, she did attend the argument with a number of her students. She expressed herself as being horrified at the interpretations placed on her work and thought by Arens. It only showed how he, too, had failed to get the real mysteries of the cult. The court decided, after due deliberation, that they could not control Spofford's mind and, as a result, the case was dismissed. Mrs. Eddy believed that the whole affair was a mistake, for, she said, the girl could have resisted the evil influences by "resting in the confidence of divine Love." There is no evidence to indicate that she doubted for a moment the evil mental depredations of Spofford, or the continuance of these on the part of her enemies until the end of her life.

Her fear of evil spirits increased from this point until it amounted to demonomania in her last days. Those who cured by such an earthly process as mental influence became in her theology the hounds of hell. A secret society

was organized and through it the students were assembled to "treat" the apostates. Mrs. Eddy would say:

> Treat Kennedy. Say to him: "Your sins have found you out. You are affected as you wish to affect me. Your evil thought returns upon you. You are bilious. You are consumptive. You have liver trouble. You have been poisoned by arsenic. . . ." [13]

In reply to criticisms engendered by these sessions Mrs. Eddy admitted in the Christian Science *Journal* of September, 1888, that a secret society had been organized but she denied that its workings were "shocking or terrible." To those who asked her to place less emphasis upon the doctrine, she addressed herself in 1885:

> In my public works I lay are the capacity, in belief, of animal magnetism, to break the decalogue, to murder, steal, commit adultery, etc. Those who deny my right or wisdom to expose its crimes are either participants in this evil, afraid of its opposed power, or ignorant of it. . . .

In 1887 a department devoted to Malicious Animal Magnetism was begun in the *Journal* and continued for years. Here the Scientists who had been hoodooed recounted their symptoms and struggles. One poor wretch is tormented by the desire to write, and the naughty tempter whispers to her that she can "write a book as good as Mrs. Eddy's." The estrangement of friends and the death of children are ascribed to the ill will of doubting neighbours. One child is reported to have died from the Malicious Animal Magnetism of the local Methodists.

Mrs. Eddy turned upon Boston in the Spring of 1878 and there began lecturing upon her discovery. She discovered, much to her delight, that it was the cultured classes and no longer the factory hands who were attending her lectures and growing interested in her doctrines. She determined, therefore, to lay the foundations of her church in the city of "liberal culture." With twenty-six members she organized in 1879 the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston. Mrs. Eddy was elected pastor and ordained after the Congregational fashion of the day. The church had no regular headquarters but met around

[13] Milmine, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

in the parlours of its members. She preached regularly on Sunday mornings and it is said that the sermons were "exhilarating" and that they moved their audiences to emotional exultation.

But the seeds of rebellion were in the First Church organization. And I use the words of a prominent authority in the history of the cult. Arens, the young man who had prosecuted the witchcraft case, wrote a book in which he stole bodily from Mrs. Eddy's philosophical tirades upon matter. Eight students walked out of the Mother Church, charging Mrs. Eddy with "frequent ebullitions of temper, love of money and the appearance of hypocrisy." It was only by a quick ruse of expelling these students first that she saved the Church's name. The remaining Scientists she quickly induced to sign resolutions expressing complete confidence in her leadership.

To heighten the tragedy and embarrassment of these years Asa G. Eddy fell seriously ill and showed signs of pining away. His case was most perplexing. He simply wasted with the passing of each day, and none could be sure what was wrong with him. Mrs. Eddy summoned a prominent physician of the day, Dr. Rufus K. Boyes, to make a diagnosis of the case. He pronounced it heart trouble and let it go at that. But Mrs. Eddy was of a different mind. She believed that her husband was suffering from the suggestion of arsenic poisoning, for the symptoms seemed be precisely those of material arsenic. She foresaw, says her biographer, what the learned physician failed to see, that the "deadliest poison is the secretion engendered by the working of hatred." Mrs. Eddy watched patiently and anxiously by her husband's bedside, until she was persuaded by friends to leave. Just before his death he cried out, " Only rid me of this suggestion of poison and I will recover." But he did not recover. He died in agony, and though an autopsy failed to reveal any cause of death other than a weak heart, Mrs. Eddy was obdurate in her belief that hosts of mental assassins fell upon her lamented mate and wrought his death. "Who can with authority deny," asks Miss Wilbur, "Mrs.

Eddy's statement that poison mentally administered killed her husband?" [14]

In Mrs. Eddy's mind there was no doubt. "My husband's death was caused," she said, "by malicious mesmerism." She bewailed in an interview that this "fiend of malpractice" was loose in the land and explained her failure to cure her husband by saying that he thought he could cure himself and she was busy with other things. She attributed the death to students who had been turned out of her college "because of their unworthiness and immorality." "One of my students," she went on, "has been heard to say that he would follow us to the grave. He has already reached my husband." She explains that both she and her husband had constantly to guard against poison long before his death and that she felt the same attack that felled him but was able to fight it off.[15]

The curious fact is that Asa Eddy died of Christian Science.

Arsenic, in the judgment and philosophy of Mother Eddy, had no power to kill save as mortal mind thinks it has. She taught that reality existed only in the province of the mind. Hence, arsenic mentally administered is every whit as fatal as arsenic physically administered. In denying the reality of matter Christian Science affirms the terrible reality of ideas. The same attitude that cures can often kill. It is as fatal to imagine illness or debility as it is healthful to deny their existence and be lost in a sea of Divine Love. In the system of thought which Mrs. Eddy gave us ideas take the place of germs and have the same vicious existence as bacilli. A good Christian Scientist will therefore be as much on guard against a nasty idea as a prophylactic mother will be against the germ of typhoid. It is only a short step from this belief to the belief in spirits and the feeling that mental assassins can produce death.

Immediately after her husband's death she telegraphed Calvin A. Fry to come at once to her home. It was Fry

[14] Wilbur, *op. cit.*, p. 280.
[15] Boston *Post*, June 5, 1882.

who dominated the place for years to come, who formed the inner circle of her protection against malicious thought-forms which should do her harm. It was Fry who, according to Dickey in his suppressed book, died one night and was raised from the dead by the interposition of Mrs. Eddy's powerful Mind, she warred with the hosts of the enemy as they crowded in upon her, and by superior Mind routed the hosts which sought to rob her of her most reliable guard.[16]

That Dickey's account of these last days is authentic and accurate has been admitted by Judge Clifford B. Smith, Chairman of the Committee on Publications for the Mother Church, at whose behest the book was recalled from circulation immediately he learned of its existence. His reasons were that, while correct in all details, the book nevertheless gave a "wholly false and distorted picture" to the world at large and would supply the "enemies of Christian Science" with wadding for their guns. He further expressed the belief that those who knew Mrs. Eddy personally or were sufficiently advanced in the knowledge of her teachings, could fit the incidents recorded into "a harmonious whole."

It seems to me that no occult knowledge is needed to fit the incidents Dickey narrates into a harmonious whole. Smith admits that Fry passed through "what mortal minds call death." He admits, as Dickey describes, that a system of watches was carefully maintained in the Eddy home to ward off mental error and protect the old lady from mental assassins who sought the life of their Leader. This system was the outgrowth of a belief expressed and admitted by the church authorities upon Asa G. Eddy's death.

"It was a constant battle for our leader," says Mr. Dickey, "to live in order that she might devote her time

[16] Adam H. Dickey, "Memoirs of Mary Baker Eddy," New York *World*, February 27–28, 1928. The book was recalled from circulation by Christian Science headquarters and the quotations contained in the *World* of the dates mentioned, based on copies sent to Washington for copyright purposes, are the only parts of the book now available. Dickey came from Kansas City in 1908 to be Mrs. Eddy's secretary. The position held until her death in 1910. He later became, according to the *World*, a trustee under Mrs. Eddy's will and a member of the Board of Directors of the Mother Church in Boston.

and energies to the conduct and welfare of the great cause." Accordingly she would call the entire household into her room and, after explaining the crisis which she faced, would ask each one impressively: "Will you keep the watch?" and each one would answer in turn, "Yes, Mother, I will."

Mr. Dickey quotes Mother Eddy as saying after her return from one of the drives which it was her wont to take:

> Mr. Dickey, I want you to know it has done me good to go on this drive. Not physical good. But the enemy have made a law that it hurts me to go on these drives and they are trying to enforce it. I do not take the drives for recreation but because I want to establish my dominion over mortal minds antagonistic to belief.

The watch which she carefully prepared was composed not merely of a schedule of guards, but of certain prescriptions which she wrote out for mental attacks. "These consisted of typewritten sheets of paper containing in numerical order names or descriptions of the phases of error Mrs. Eddy wished them to handle. She was constantly assailed by malpractice and it was necessary for someone to take up this work and aid her in freeing herself from these different attacks." These by-laws she received in the sane manner that she received *Science and Health* and Joseph Smith received the Book of Mormon.

All of which is completely in line with the events which began to take place when her students charged Spofford with bewitching poor Lucretia Brown and she charged the enemies of the faith with poisoning her husband by the administration of mental arsenic. The beliefs narrated both by her biographer and by Dickey are the logical consummation of the beliefs which she taught. She raised the mind to such heights that it became a Frankenstein and destroyed her. By denying reality she brought into existence a more horrible reality. She proved the truth of Christian Science by her fear and tragedy as well as by her cures and health. Even the weather irked her, Fry reports, and she regarded snowfall as a manifestation of mortal error. Yet after all, there was so little that could

really be done about it, though she charged her guards to wage war against it. When her husband died, she calmed her followers and silenced the world by the simple statement, "I believe in God's supremacy over error, and this gives me peace." Yet it did not give her peace; the difficulty of maintaining the belief in God's supremacy and the necessity of for ever resisting error, gave her hell.

However much her inward tranquillity may have been disturbed just now, her church had begun to get gloriously on its way. There were further hindrances, however, for in 1888 thirty-six of the faithless deserted the cause, going over to the heresy of New Thought. She managed this crisis as she had managed all others, sent out more and more practitioners, and enjoyed remarkable success in demonstrating the truth of the cause. She laboured earnestly until 1895, when she retired from the world, stated that she would have no more to do with the adjustment of domestic or financial difficulties and from the quietness of her home directed the great movement of her church until her death in 1910. This withdrawal only served to heighten the adoration which her students felt for her, and they insisted upon paying visits to her home. In most cases they were rewarded only by the privilege of seeing her start on her drives, but in 1903 she addressed ten thousand pilgrims from her balcony.

IV

Now what were the doctrines this little woman taught in high astounding terms and polysyllables? The assumption prevails that she taught the cure of disease by teaching her followers to imagine health. Nothing could be further from the true gospel of Mother Eddy. Her mind was never permitted to toy with an idea so simple as that. It roved in the realm of metaphysical vagaries, drawing from this and from that source some postulate or affirmation which sounded convincing, and fashioning the various parts into a synthetic whole. Animal magnetizers may wickedly suppose that disease can be cured by mental suggestion; to Mother Eddy that was the grossest sort of

heresy. She believed that healing must be accomplished in accord with certain basic divine laws set forth for the good of mankind in the holy words of *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*. Until the full and insistent implications of her system are grasped, there is no way to understand Christian Science.

She began by denying the reality of matter. In that she was no neologist, but she went leagues farther than any philosopher ever dared to go. She was an idealist with a vengeance, and a religionist on top of it all. Everything displeasing to her was erroneous—a postulate which she was more than consistent in carrying out in all her thinking and writing. Metaphysically stated, as the Christian Scientist would say, that principle is as follows:

> There is no life, truth, intelligence or substance in matter. All is infinite mind and its infinite manifestations, for God is All-in-all. Spirit is immortal truth; matter is mortal error. Spirit is real and eternal; matter is unreal and temporal. Spirit is God and man His image and likeness. Therefore man is not material; he is spiritual.[17]

That may be cited as the kernel of the Christian Science doctrine. It must be perfectly grasped before anyone can cure gastritis or attempt to ward off mental poisoning. The material universe and the physical body are mistakes; we are as spiritual entities safely lost in a fathomless sea of infinite and beneficent Mind, and if we but rest our weary selves upon this realization, we become spiritual and lose the sense of pain and error. Only as we are egocentric and stiff-necked, exalting our bodies and our puny ideas, do we come into the danger zone of illness. "God is incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, Love." Mind is the principle of the Universe; all that exists is infinite Mind and its ideas. Man and the universe are simply God's ideas. This is the cryptic meaning of the passage in Genesis where it says that man is made in the image of God. Since it is true that we are the image of God and equally true that God is all that Mother Eddy says he is, it follows without doubt that both the true mind and the

[17] *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 468.

true universe are spiritual, eternal, perfect, expressing the divine nature.

God is All-in-all.
God is good. Good is mind.
God, Spirit, being all, nothing is matter.
Life, God, omnipotent good, deny death, evil, sin, disease. Disease, sin, evil, death, deny God, omnipotent good, Life.[18]

Apparently this is the syllogism which Mother Eddy tried so hard to prevail upon Quimby to produce. It summarizes her argument in one monstrous affirmation, reducing the whole universe to a dilemma in its last words. But in the dilemma which it presents, Mother Eddy finds no difficulty. To let the affirmation in favour of evil stand would of course be to fly in the face of reason and theology. Both affirmations are not true; she concludes: "According to the Scripture, I find that God is true, 'but every mortal man a liar.'"

That settles it. God is the only cause; therefore reality must consist of God or Good. Evil, sin, sickness, and death, being contrary to the nature of God, are simply unreal. The presence of evil must be plausibly accounted for if any religion is to seem profound. Now, to admit that God is the origin of evil seemed to Mother Eddy contrary to the facts of Holy Writ, rightly interpreted. She rejected the Fall as insufficient to account for the phenomenon. Now, God being not the cause of evil, it must emanate from some other source, which is unthinkable, for such a concession would mean that there is in the universe a strong power at loggerheads with God and even temporarily supreme. Equally unthinkable. There is, by a process of eliminating the unthinkables, only one conclusion left. There really isn't any evil, save as mortal mind allows it to exist by unspiritual and fleshly thinking.

In brief, Christian Science denies the old supernatural, and teaches its followers themselves to become supernatural. It is entirely in accord with its postulates that every man should overcome death as Jesus did. Just as

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 113.

speakers today claim God as the first advertising man, Adam as the first Rotarian, so the devotees of the Mother cult long ago claimed Jesus as the first Scientist. He was simply ahead of his day. Speaking before the World Religious Conference at the Chicago Fair, D. K. Easton, one of the early pastors who had imbibed the doctrine, said this:

> When Jesus came forth from the tomb, it was not because he had supernatural assistance. He was only asserting the great fact of every man's being, viz., that man cannot die.

He proved death a "false claimant." "The central thought and efficiency of the resurrection is not the mere rising of the physical body from a material grave." Nay, rather:

> Jesus in the silence and darkness of the tomb, aided only by his demonstrated Scientific knowledge of the great facts of Life, Truth, and Love, burst the bonds of death, unwrapped the winding sheet of material thought, and walked forth, conqueror over man's great enemy. . . .

In short, "Jesus rose from the dead because he realized that he had never died." Had he for one moment admitted the reality of death "into his thought, he would have stood powerless in the presence of the claim of death." And therefore:

> The ultimate ideal of Christian Science is to overcome death in the same way that Jesus did, and when we follow His life perfectly, we shall do it.[19]

If we forget for a moment the vigorous appeal which Christian Science has made through its restorative power, there is yet another factor to explain its success and glory. I refer to the chance it gives every man to be a philosopher and a scientist. In its ranks we behold the spectacle of thousands of moderately informed persons being called scientists and being regarded as metaphysicians. This fact must not be underrated in considering the popularity of Mrs. Eddy's system. It makes a subtle appeal. We breathe

[19] D. K. Easton, Address before the World Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1893.

an atmosphere of science today, and everyone has some hankering to be a philosopher. Mrs. Eddy got her method under weigh during the period when the first wave of scientific thought struck these shores and when the result of this wave threatened to be disastrous. The very term "Christian Science" carries a theological wallop. It answers rather conclusively the charge of conflict between science and religion by affirming that religion is science. No modernist has been quite so adroit as Mother Eddy in catching the popular imagination and desire with a phrase—and what does it matter for the moment if the phrase was borrowed? It was well borrowed, and it set folks at ease as no other claptrap argument has done since the days of Darwin.

To feel that one is a true Scientist and that all casual experimentation outside the Church is of the devil, is incredibly consoling. But I must emphasize the further and equally potent fact: To say that one is a metaphysician is flattering, for that posits, in the general public mind, a dexterity and agility of mind which not everyone possesses. Ruth B. Ewing, in discussing "Spirit and Matter" in 1893, said this:

> True metaphysics, we believe, had not been discovered, practically stated, and demonstrated, until set forth in the present age as Christian Science. . . . Christian Science must needs embrace the statement of all truth to the exclusion of all error—if it is to substantiate its claim to be thoroughly Christian and scientific.[20]

Consider the contributions which Christian Science has made to religious thinking, the comfort which must ensue from these contributions, and the secret of its success will be perfectly clear. First, it restored healing to the shrine and declared it to be of God; second, it asserted once again that the Church possessed all truth to the exclusion of all error—bolstering the claim with a new idea of truth and a new idea of error; third, it offered its followers a minutely scientific interpretation of the Bible

[20] Ruth B. Ewing, "Spirit and Matter." Address before World Parliament of Religions, Chicago, 1983. These interpretations were offered in the good old days before pastors were eliminated from the Christian Science organization and the works of Mother Eddy made the sole instructors.

in an hour when the authority of the Good Book began to be seriously undermined; fourth, it made philosophers and scientists of its followers at a time when those two classes were most celebrated. Through its ample assistance, "men came into a scientific knowledge of God." Its vast underpinnings of polysyllables gave a philosophic support to religious optimism at a time when it was sorely needed.

A sample of the polysyllablic philosophy of Christian Science may be seen in what Mother Eddy did to the Lord's prayer. As it stood it was hopelessly brief and unscientific. Hence she filled it with spiritual meaning after this fashion:

> Our father: Mother God, all harmonious, Adorable One, Thy kingdom is come; Thou art ever present. Enable us to know—as in heaven, so on earth—God is omnipotent, supreme. Give us grace for today; feed the famished affections; and love is reflected in love; and God leadeth us not in temptation, but delivereth from sin, disease, and death. For God is Infinite, all Power, all Life, Truth, Love, over all and All.

V

It is not surprising that a religion which sprang from Mrs. Eddy should be given to amusing but logical excesses. There is the case of Mrs. Josephine Curtis Woodbury, who gave birth in 1890 to a son whom followers believed to be the result of an immaculate conception, in perfect accord with Mrs. Eddy's theory of producing life by mental generation. Mrs. Woodbury named the child Prince of Peace and baptised it in a pool which she named Bethesda. Mrs. Eddy promptly disowned Mrs. Woodbury and her clique, and Mrs. Woodbury retaliated by an attack upon Mrs. Eddy in the *Arena* of May, 1899. In this attack she criticized the English of *Science and Health,* satirized its author as the star-crowned woman of the Apocalypse, and charged that she was a victim of demonomania.

Or there is the case of Mrs. Augusta E. Stetson, who has never for one moment relinquished her dizzy regard for the sainted Mrs. Eddy, though she too was disowned by the Mother Church. She went to New York when

Christian Science was practically unknown and built up a powerful church from poor and unpromising beginnings. Immediately headquarters became suspicious, and when in 1908 she announced that she would erect a temple which would "rival in beauty any other religious structure in America," Mrs. Eddy became concerned lest it transcend the Mother Church. In 1909 she was deprived of her right to teach and practise and charged with an attempt to "control and to injure persons by mental means." Yet hear her estimate of Mother Eddy as carried in a paid advertisement in the New York *Tribune* for January 23, 1921:

> Her earthly experience runs parallel with that of her Master; understood in a small degree only by the few who faintly see and accept the truth, she stood during her earthly mission and now stands on the mount of spiritual illumination toward whose heights no feet but those of the blessed Master have so directly toiled, first in agony, and finally, like Jesus Christ the masculine representative of the Fatherhood of God, she as the feminine representative of the Motherhood of God, will appear in triumphant demonstration of divine power and glory as the combined ideal of man in God's image and likeness.

Unless it be for the purpose of restoring Mrs. Stetson to favour, there seems to me little point in Mother Eddy's return. She organized her works before she left in such a manner that the Church can never forget her and never depart from her decretals.

Through the Christian Science *Journal* of 1895 she announced without previous warning that there would be no more preachers in the Church. She ordained the Bible and *Science and Health* as "the Pastor, on this planet, of all Churches of the Christian Science denomination." She decreed that each Church should have a First and Second Reader and that the sermon each Sunday should consist of extracts read from the two sacred books mentioned. No comments or explanatory remarks were permitted, and the possibility of any transcendent person who might rise within the Church was cut off.

As early as 1893 the following ukase appeared in the Christian Science *Journal*:

I see no advantage and great disadvantage in one student's opinions or *modus operandi* becoming the basis for all others; read *Retrospection* on this subject. Science is absolute and best understood through the study of my work and a daily Christian demonstration. It is *materiality* that clogs the student's progress, and "this kind goeth not forth but by prayer and fasting." It is materialism through which the animal magnetizer preys and becomes a prey. Spirituality is the basis of all true volition. Assembling themselves together and listening to each other amicably, or contentiously, I have seen, is no aid to the student in acquiring solid Christian Science. Experience, and above all *obedience* are the tests of growth and understanding in Science.

That she should have a successor never entered her own mind or that of her followers. As Mr. Alfred Farlow, her press agent, put it, it would be as impossible for anyone to succeed Mrs. Eddy as it would "for an individual to succeed Columbus as the discoverer of America." She left a Church which could never be changed. The by-laws were given by God and cannot be amended without Mrs. Eddy's consent. The directors, five in all, were appointed with the approval of Mrs. Eddy; they hold their places for life and name their successors. They elect all the officers of the Mother Church and have control over all of the branches.[21] She established a press bureau to keep down the ridicule which was rampant in the early nineties. She summoned Mr. Farlow to Boston; he was at that time playing a bass horn in the brass band at Beatrice, Nebraska, keeping a store, and manufacturing brooms on the side. He had earlier proved himself worthy in the building of the church at Kansas City. He came to Boston, established an office, subscribed to a press clipping bureau, began writing letters to the press in defence of Christian Science, and within a short time had built up the marvelous system of effective press control which has made the committee on Publications famous.

Through her incomparable organization Mrs. Eddy's books have been distributed. Certainly she never lost a chance to exploit the sale to the uttermost. In 1897 she ordered everyone to give up teaching for a year and use her books as the one source of authority. After the 1891

[21] See Burton J. Hendrick, "Christian Science Since Mrs. Eddy," McClure's Magazine, September, 1912.

edition of *Science and Health* appeared anyone who used the 1886 edition was regarded as living, spiritually, in the dark ages. As Dr. Foster Eddy wrote concerning the 1891 edition:

> Mother has never had time, until the last two years, to take the numerous gems she has found in the deep mines of truth and polish them on Heaven's emery wheel, arrange them in order, and give them a setting so that *all* could behold and see their perfect purity. Now here they are in this new revised edition of *Science and Health*.

By the time the 1891 edition was exhausted a hundred and fifty thousand copies had been sold.

A fretful and domineering child of poor parents, given to fits of temper, using big words with little comprehension, dressing vainly and parading through her village streets in ribbons and frills, marrying a bricklayer, giving birth to a child who was later taken over by her sister, living about from house to house, being rocked to sleep by the hired man, marrying again—this time an itinerant dentist who killed frogs in the nearby brook that she might sleep undisturbed—suffering from chronic invalidism, hearing of a travelling quack and studying his philosophy, saving money from her allowance for the trip to see him, studying both his methods and his writing and ideas sedulously and long into the night, roving about from place to place, talking of Quimby, curing herself by the method she had taught him, labouring hard with her first classes and standing staunchly in the face of opposition, facing lawsuits and heresies—all the while evolving an inspiration and writing a Bible which should exalt her to the spiritual queenship of more than two million people.

In retrospection from the peaks of eminence the valley through which she had passed took on a strangely tinted afterglow, luminous with the events of a God-ordained life. She never lost her sense of drama, and if drama was lacking in the depressingly actual life she led during her first sixty years, she supplied it without stint when the hour of her triumph came. In her Message to the Church in 1902 she says:

Six weeks I waited on God to suggest a name for the book I had been writing. Its title, *Science and Health, With Key to the Scriptures,* came to me in the silence of night, when the steadfast stars watched over the world—when slumber had fled and I rose and recorded the hallowed suggestion.

Who would be rude enough to deny her the pleasure she got? When she left Lynn she was sixty-one years of age and she had fewer than fifty followers, most of them illiterate hands from neighbouring shoe factories. By 1896 there were four hundred churches and societies and some thirty institutions for teaching. From 1890 to 1906, according to Burton J. Hendrick, the membership of her church increased 900 per cent. She began with the outcast of the earth who could scarcely pay the rent and ended with a spiritual corporation directed along lines of unblemished efficiency by clubmen of prominence and financial standing. That she should be greatly admired, even among scoffers, is to be expected, for she did as much as any other person to perpetuate the great American tradition that anything is possible among us.

X

UNITY

I

In the centre of the United States rests an oracle of Truth which more than two million people consult each year. Its priestesses are not hidden by vapours which issue from the bowels of the earth but stationed in well ventilated shrines at a hundred and twenty-five typewriters, before telephone switchboards and telegraph receiving sets, in immediate touch with humanity and with the infinite. It serves, not the overlords and kings of earth with advice anent battles and catastrophies, but the discouraged, the unhappy, and all "who wish to grow more prosperous and successful." Its answers are solicited on such momentous questions as how to pass examinations, how to acquire a mate, how to spiritualize the sex life; and anyone who has a relative who insists on writing to the oracle for advice on all matters of the heart and purse will understand what an infectious influence it has upon its entranced followers.

This modern and scientifically managed oracle does business under the name of the Unity School of Christianity. Like Christian Science, Shakerism and Theosophy, it is the work of a woman—"a miracle wrought by a woman's faith." Myrtle Fillmore, wife of Charles Fillmore and part owner with him of the present munificent holdings of the order, has long been regarded as the high priestess of Unity. Forty years ago the Fillmore family lay in direst poverty; their status on the fast expanding American frontier was a sort of compound between that of Job after the devastation sent upon him by Jehovah and Mother Ann Lee after her husband ran

off with another woman. Mr. Fillmore—and I draw my material from an account of the cult bearing the imprimatur of Unity headquarters—was maimed; his wife was suffering from what was in that day called consumption; and three of his children were ailing. Furthermore, he was at this time in abject poverty and "not a glimpse of sunshine could be discerned in the heavens of the future." The father and husband had lost the power to provide food and shelter for his family.

As a child, Charles Fillmore was a cripple from a hip disease which had shortened his right leg. In addition, he had curvature of the spine and was deaf in his right ear. But he somehow grew up and married. Then his wife contracted tuberculosis, and for six years the family, with three children, lived in the states of Texas and Colorado, hoping in the arid climate there to discover the fountain of health. It was after a fruitless search that they came to Kansas City, where Charles Fillmore entered the real estate business and became as successful as the men one now reads about in the New Thought advertisements. Within a short time he had amassed a hundred and fifty thousand dollars—no small sum for the early eighties in the Middle West. But he had done it while the town was on a boom, and when one of those deflations which make American economic life so hazardous befell the citizens of Kansas, Charles Fillmore was left without a penny. Hard upon the heels of this misfortune, as though God was testing him, the members of the family fell ill again and the father found himself unable to buy clothing or food or medicine for them.

Here is where Myrtle Fillmore comes in. Just when the family was sunken to the lowest depths of gloom, Myrtle became inspired. Just how is not quite clear. But it is probable that, as so many in the New Thought movement have done, she visualized prosperity and happiness. Suffice it to say that she got a new outlook on life. She had, during the many months of adversity, reasoned that there must be a supreme power "operating upon a fixed divine law, and that this law, applied in faith and faithfully, must of necessity set aside all nega-

tive or destructive agencies"—such as real estate collapses, let us say. A perfectly normal conclusion for one to reach who is buffeted by an unsound society and forced through ill health into the humiliation that comes to the unfit.

And yet the conclusion worked, just as it has worked thousands of times since. The good woman's tuberculosis vanished like a magician's rabbit, as did the ailments of the children. Then she began treating her friends by the methods of the new discovery. "Sickness and poverty became only as bad dreams. In their place health and ability to work reigned. And Charles Fillmore, grasping the full meaning of this divine law, began to help her in her ministrations, reaping much benefit, physically, mentally, and materially." [1] Within a few months the whole horizon of the Fillmores had shifted, giving rise to new visions and new sunrises, and all because of the solemn conclusions of the good wife and mother. These were the modest and lowly beginnings of a religion which has throughout the world today as many adherents as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Once the practicality of the woman's faith had been demonstrated, Fillmore relinquished his hopes of ever cleaning up again on real estate and in 1889, after three years of experimental practice on friends, the two decided to devote their entire time to the practice of the new faith which had fallen like the mantle of the prophets upon their shoulders.

What should the good people name the work they had started? That was the problem. During the eighties the devotees of strange religions were by no means as glib with words or as clever with advertising terminology as they are today. So it was that Mrs. Eddy reports awaking from a dream in the middle of the night and writing down by inspiration the stirring title for her book, *Science and Health, with a Key to the Scriptures.* And a name of similar resonance and beauty struck Mrs. Fillmore as she lay musing one night upon what term would

[1] From an account in the Kansas City *Star,* by V. S. Sutton-Mattocks. Quoted in Unity Catalogue.

symbolize their "sympathy for all movements helping in the uplift of humanity." She thought of the word "Unity," and it stuck. It suggests not only the oneness of man and God, which is the prime postulate of the New Thought, but also the solidarity of all religions, which is the cardinal tenet of at least five of the modern faiths. For Unity, it must be remembered, is "not a sect or a church, but a school for investigating and demonstrating the scientific principles taught by Jesus, and for giving instructions regarding these principles." It does not teach separation from the Church, but exhorts its followers to introduce Truth into the Churches of which they are members.

According to its own claims, Unity sprang into being quite independently of all cults and with equal independence reached maturity. But its stuff is too closely akin to the stuff of *Nautilus* and Orison Swett Marden to be mistaken in identity. It was undoubtedly joined by an umbilical cord to the New Thought, and sired by Christian Science. Over in New England Mother Eddy had already published several editions of *Science and Health* and I suppose that the disciples of Christian Science can claim that Mrs. Filmore heard the glad tidings from afar and devised her own system on snatches of true Science which she gathered, or that she had read a copy of *Science and Health*. By the time Unity arose Mrs. Eddy had fairly well demonstrated that she could cure disease by the flatulent philosophy she taught, and Warren Felt Evans had begun to give the world his commentaries on the work of Quimby. It is obvious that the teaching of the Fillmores partakes largely of both the unwieldly and amorphous body of doctrine known as the New Thought and the solidly contrived dogmas of Christian Science. Yet it is equally obvious that each attained its abnormal proportions without the aid of the other, for each was destined through the shrewd foresight and happy insight of its founder to amass wealth and build a colossal business organization on the reliable foundations of American psychosis. Certainly Unity differs as much from Christian Science as Christian Science from the faith of

Quimby. Myrtle Fillmore brought the twist of genius to her task, and she lent grace and singularity to the enterprise she launched. The result today is an organization which bears nothing but a speculative historical connexion to the Mother Church in Boston and is comparable to Christian Science only in the superb business generalship of its founder.

Not the least difference between the policies instituted by Mother Eddy and those of the Fillmores is brought out in the decision which the pair reached shortly after they began their works of grace: "If the power of God is doing this healing and this work, then we have no right to set a price upon it. So we are going to do this work knowing that God will reward us." He has, abundantly. And the Fillmore establishment maintains its policy to this day, for a great part of the work done by its enormous plant at Kansas City is supported entirely by free will offerings which grateful gout addicts and purged converts send in from time to time.

The beginnings continued modest, even after Mrs. Fillmore had thought of the happy name for the faith. They began at once to print tracts, using a small composing room for the work and distributing the doctrine as far as funds would allow. They began to issue a magazine called *Modern Thought*—now known as *Unity Magazine*. Their work in those days was carried on under the name of the Unity Tract Society. And it was in those days that the work of Silent Unity began, with the aid of only one worker to help in absent healing. Now the work accomplished by the Silent Unity branch alone requires the full time effort of more than sixty trained workers, answering letters, giving advice, offering prayers, and assisting in every possible way the immense machinery of absent psychic healing which the Unity School of Christianity has put on a modern business basis. Mrs. Eddy prayed P. P. Quimby to come to her in his angel form. That was terribly old fashioned, as we shall see when we study the methods of this modern business organization which cures thousands every year through efficiency letters and circular advice.

One day the assembled saints, deeply aware of the far flung possibilities of their tract society, decided to elect twelve directors and to begin a campaign of expansion. A building committee was appointed and a lot chosen at a strategic point in the Gotham of the Middle West. One penny—no more—was donated toward the completed building, but that penny was solemnly and ceremoniously blessed in the ramshackle temple which served Unity in those days and it was not long until it had drawn thousands of other pennies to it and the faithful were able to pay four hundred dollars down on the lot selected. A small but adequate structure was erected; the work began to spread, and soon contributions were coming into headquarters from every section of the state and from surrounding states though at no time was the cult highly evangelical. "Each person who is helped by Unity passes the news on to others," says Charles Fillmore. It was only a short while before an adjoining lot was needed and an architect, with commendable faith and foresight, voluntarily drew the plans for a thoroughly up-to-date plant which remained for a time the headquarters of the School.

II

From its ardent but unimpressive beginnings Unity has become in thirty years almost as great a feat as that wrought by the hand of God in the six days of Genesis. But with Unity there is no rest. Today there are more than forty well-organized departments taking "the message of Truth to millions through the printed words." There is a publishing department using more than forty thousand feet of floor space, buttressed by a mail-opening, an accounting, and a sales department. The literature of the order is distributed by the sales department to more than two thousand centres, classes, and dealers who are selling "Unity literature direct to Truth students." In addition, there is the department of the Silent-70, organized to carry on by tracts a work which has encircled the world in three decades. "Members of the Silent-70

are the 'labourers' sent 'into his harvest.' " They are to be found in almost every city and hamlet, and their total number was twelve thousand in 1927.

There is a subscription and order department in which trained letter readers and a staff of experienced and consecrated students of Truth are employed to care for the correspondence which empties daily into the School anent its publications and magazines. There is also a special letter writing department which gives prompt and courteous attention to all inquiries from every conceivable source.

The School reports with pride that eighty-four hundred parcel post orders are filled monthly at headquarters. There is also a staff of experienced workers who spend their time exclusively putting spiritual enclosures in outgoing mail and otherwise supervising the cult's immense daily output of over seventy-six hundred letters. The field department has for its motto, "A Unity Study Class in Every Community."

We can catch some vision of the welcome accorded the labours of these inspired tractarians when we know that a thousand yearly subscriptions to Unity periodicals are entered daily and that a number of the more grateful and credulous have paid their subscriptions for one hundred years in advance! In round numbers the total output of Unity publications, including books, booklets, tracts, and so forth, is twelve million a year! More than four hundred and thirty-five thousand stencils are used for the addressing of the magazines alone. Two hundred dollars for postage is used daily, and two million sheets of paper pass through the Unity presses each month. More than three hundred tons of paper and seven thousand pounds of ink are required for the Unity publications a year.

There is, furthermore, a phonograph recording department where Charles Fillmore speaks words of love and light, offering healing and prosperity thoughts with explanations, so that by a yearly subscription plan costing the user only three dollars, each follower of the gleam may have these first-hand elucidations of the ideas of the

order. One of his records has to do with the Consecration of the House and the catalogue of records asks: "Can you imagine anything more desirable, were you moving into a new home, than to have Charles Fillmore dedicate it?" On record No. 401 the McDowell Sisters, "Sweethearts of the Air," sing "In The Garden," with stringed instrument accompaniment. The records which come from Unity studios have the advantages of being "flexible, durable, and unbreakable."

There is of course a correspondence course, explaining "the Jesus Christ teachings in clear language" and teaching "the student how to demonstrate metaphysical laws." This department, like most of the others, conducts its labours gratis, and relies entirely upon the love offerings of satisfied students. Unity has more than ten thousand correspondents in countries overseas. "Millions of other persons in foreign countries are awakening to Truth, but as yet the actual demand is not sufficient to justify the printing of all our publications in foreign languages." The work of foreign translation has begun, however, for some of the publications have been printed in French, German, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, and Norwegian. The physically blind are not to be neglected. A fund has been created for extensive work, and already the book *Finding The Christ* is available in revised Braille.

The Unity School has its own broadcasting station, with a 1000 watt transmitter and a wave length of 278 metres. More than sixteen hundred requests for healing daily pour into the Silent Unity department—of which we shall hear at delightful length in a moment. Unity Vegetarian Inn, with a miniature theatre on the second floor, advertises itself as the largest and most beautiful vegetarian cafeteria in the world. Unity Farm, just now getting under weigh as the new headquarters of the cult, is located some miles from Kansas City and the buildings are supplied with heat from the oil wells which the organization owns. A three-reel motion picture, entitled "A Trip Through Unity School of Christianity," has been filmed and is being exhibited in the field, "so that Truth students who do not visit Unity headquarters may have an

opportunity of getting a view and vision of this work." The wealth of the order, controlled largely by the Fillmores, is something more than three millions of dollars.

So much for the vast and enviable organization with which Unity does its work. It has not been my intention to bore the reader statistically with this array of figures. It would be misleading to tell first of the rigid control which its doctrines, distributed by mail and by apostles of Truth, exercise over the neurotic and unhappy men and women of the land. For from an outside viewpoint Unity is first and foremost, in its scheme and in its purposes, an organization of astounding efficiency; it has reached and claimed its millions, not primarily because of the odd teachings which it promulgates but because of its unprecedented manner of promulgating them. It has transformed the United States Mail into a missionary machine. Having relied almost entirely upon the shrewdly printed and ably distributed word for its enormous success, it offers to alarmed orthodox ministers the best possible study if they are genuinely anxious to stop the exodus from the churches to the isms. If any man will look patiently at the work which Unity performs, with its seventy-six hundred letters a day, its colossal broadcasting station, its twelve million publications a year, its thoroughly capable prayer department, he will understand the methods by which effective religion today must function. It is, in brief, a rhapsody in statistics, and therefore the key to modern religious enterprise.

III

Yet the fact remains that the Unity product has been thoroughly and soundly sold. It takes something more than cheap printing to explain the fascination that its doctrines has for those scattered sheep who worship at its shrine. I know one home, presided over by a rather distinguished professor of biology, which has been virtually rent in twain by the wife's devoted adherence to Unity principles. I know that the wife fully expects her rosy daughter to live to be five hundred years old and to die

of her own accord if she dies at all. I know the worshipful adoration which she holds for Unity literature and the equal contempt which her husband holds. I know also of another woman who will consult no physicians, no merely Christian Science practitioner if her young son falls ill. Rather she will write or wire the School of Silent Unity and ask for immediate prayer and advice. The same applies if she faces any serious financial problem or domestic difficulty, and the curious and to her convincing fact is that she has never yet been disappointed. With its many trunk lines leading to headquarters, Unity is able to announce that someone may be reached any time of the day or night by telephone in Kansas City, and many good cures have been effected over the phone. Each month a Healing Thought is broadcast by the order from its Kansas City citadel, and this is supposed to be repeated over and over again during the month; there is also a Prosperity Thought which will bring opulence as surely as the Healing Thought will bring health. Each month, too, there is published a small booklet called *Unity Daily Word,* which contains some choice morsel for every day of the year, prefaced by the injunction, "Carry this thought with you!" and followed by an elucidation. For June 1, 1927, the daily thought was, "I depend upon God, in his infinite justice, to adjust and to harmonize all of my affairs." Part of the exhortation which follows is in these words: "Injustice is strictly a matter of personal consciousness and when we are established in spiritual consciousness we are free from injustice."

When we remember that thousands upon thousands of salubrious suggestions are issued every month and that there is great *esprit de corps* among Unity followers, we see the immense effect wrought by mass thought and consciousness. Every day at noon and every evening at nine o'clock, the widely scattered members of the School of Silent Unity go apart into the silence and meditate hard upon the Healing Thought, the Prosperity Thought and the Golden Words sent out from Sinai.

Very soon parts of the school are to be moved to the

new territory acquired fifteen miles out of Kansas City, where Unity City is to be erected. The holdings now comprise more than eleven hundred acres of unusually fertile land, which nature has blessed with both gas and oil in sufficient quantities to supply the needs of a large organization. A dam is being built there to impound a lake of some twenty acres, with seventy-five million gallons of water. The dam will cost a hundred thousand dollars. Improvements on the farm up to the beginning of 1927 represented an outlay of half a million dollars, and the buildings to be erected during the present year already involve an expenditure of a million and a half.

The purpose of Unity City is twofold. First, more space is needed. The work has outgrown its present quarters. The press room and bindery are crowded. The office desks are coming closer and closer together. Moreover, Unity's eleven periodicals are growing rapidly in circulation, and with each new edition of books and lessons, new material is added. More letters come in each year than came before—and thousands of these letters are requests for prayer. And "the farm seems to be the logical place to carry on the enormous world-redeeming work that Unity is doing."

The second reason is more important and more significant in a study of cults. The scheme is to found in Unity City a colony which shall be self-sustaining and united in idealistic enterprise. Already there is an apartment house on the grounds, to say nothing of a number of artistic residences. When improvements have been completed, the invitation will be offered to followers of the Unity idea throughout the world to coagulate there and demonstrate in one blessed and beatific community the efficacy of Unity teaching. "Those who spiritually understand the truth taught by Jesus and who are able to render needed assistance to the cause will be eligible to become residents at Unity City." The industrial activities will be varied, the School announces, but the idea of an economically autonomous community will be paramount in all that is done. Says the prospectus recently issued by the Trustees of the Unity School of Christianity:

The paramount ideal of Unity City will be the setting up, on earth, of the kingdom of the heavens—the ideal of peace and harmony, prosperity and health, to be established right here on earth. We look forward to the fulfillment of the vision of John given in the 21st chapter of Revelation.

Unity City shall be first, last, and always an educational city, a community where all people will constantly be at school, learning more each day about the law of God and the application of that law to human affairs and broadcasting this knowledge to the world. It will be a community school, inculcating spiritual, ethical and industrial knowledge. All members of the city, regardless of age, will be pupils of the school.

At present Unity City is simply regarded by the trustees as "the greatest Christian Service Station of the American continent." And as the project gets started, they ask for the following prayer on the part of all true followers, which should demonstrate, I believe, that they have in mind something considerably above a mere artisans' colony:

God bless Unity City. All activities of Unity City are in divine order. Divine life inspires it and divine power protects it.

So history gets ready to repeat itself in a most melancholy way. Not content with having built up the most astonishing sales agency in the annals of religious enterprise, the Fillmores now look eagerly to the time when they can found another Utopia, to bring, as all Utopias have hoped to do, the Kingdom of God to earth. The students of contemporary society may watch with some anxiety and interest the establishment of a community which begins with as much wealth, prestige, and foresight as any that has ever been set up.

Until the ideal community is established we must content ourselves with the feats performed by the present organization. I have already alluded to the Healing Thought sent out each month. For April 1926 this thought was as follows: "Spiritual faith springs into my consciousness and I am made whole and perfect." Cures effected by these simple, soothing words are miraculous. Indeed it would seem that any cure, however slight,

wrought by such methods, could properly be called amazing.

The School of Silent Unity announces itself as "the department of Unity that helps to bring our absent friends into closer touch with the Holy Spirit. We can, through the Holy Spirit, reach you in the remotest corner of the world." Each month they send out this assurance and command.

> If you are sick the Holy Spirit will heal you; if you are in financial need, the Holy Spirit will show you the way to prosperity; if you are unjustly treated the Holy Spirit will restore your own to you; if you are unhappy, the Holy Spirit will adjust conditions and bring about harmony. . . .
>
> Silent Unity makes no charge for its services. If your need is urgent, telegraph us; you may send a letter later. If you live in Kansas City, telephone us at any hour of the day or night in case of urgent need, and send a letter later. Be sure to give your full name and address. . . .

In response to this injunction, a regular avalanche of letters descends upon the School each day telling how the very thought of Unity has served as ample cause for healing. One fellow perfected a decayed tooth by saying, "I am God's child of perfection and nothing but perfection can be manifest through me." That formula cured one tooth. He later went into the silence and cured the remainder, though they were all in an advanced stage of decay when he wrote to Unity.

Whether there is a prayer department to which such supplications are referred is never made entirely clear. From what I can gather from the testimonials, the mere swinging of the dumb-bells of concentrations upon high ideals seems to turn the trick. For example:

> When I wrote you about a week ago asking your prayers for my little four-year-old daughter, she was suffering nearly all the time with some stomach or bowel trouble which the doctors were unable to diagnose. Twenty-five minutes after I mailed the letter to you, she was out playing—the first time in two weeks she had cared to play. She has been perfectly well ever since.

A swifter cure of constipation is reported to have taken place within two hours after mailing the coupon to Kansas City. Informed of this an unbelieving friend of mine

remarked: "That must be assigned to the cathartic qualities of the postage stamp."

"While washing I got my hand fast in an electric wringer," writes another. "I declared the truth about God's hands. The power went off and I took my hand out; there was not a bone broken. I finished the washing and did all the cleaning. My hand is not the least bit sore." This power of Unity seems to operate in cases small as well as large: "I have been wonderfully blessed by your prayers. I have been healed of my hay fever. I thank God and Unity." Apart from the testimonials recorded in advertisements of yeast, I know of no such literature of gratitude as we may find in the columns of Unity's periodicals.

The Good Words Club is still another branch of the order. It was organized in 1915 and now has more than fifty thousand zealous members. Those joining this club "pledge to guard their conversation against all negative words and to speak words of trust, faith, truth, courage, cheer, purity, peace, prosperity, praise, and joy." This department also supplies its members with the "Good Words Reminder Box, in which the user may place thank offerings when he replaces negative words with good ones." Each time the user employs a good word where he was tempted to use a bad one, he is to deposit the thank offering into the box, and at the end of each month he is to send his thanksgiving to headquarters, where it is used to progress the lordly work of purifying the conversation and obliterating the evil suggestions which cloud the horizon of latter-day man.

Unity supplies each convert and prospect with the chance to buy at par its Prosperity Bank. The lofty purpose of this device is first "to help you realize your own prosperity" and then to provide a "working basis for the application of divine law to one's prosperity. It gives a practical lesson in demonstrating the reality of the principles of prosperity." A second purpose is that of bringing the work of Unity to one's friends and thus pointing them to a larger vision. And the third and obviously incidental purpose is to enlarge the Unity subscription lists. For

the idea here is to fill the bank with enough coin in a given period to send some publication or pamphlet of the order to more prospects among the spiritual heathen. The stuffed coffer is sent to Unity headquarters and one thereby pays for the instruction of some benighted acquaintance in the secrets of Truth. Yet it must not be assumed that the owner of the bank is neglected by Unity. As a matter of fact, along with the Bank "you receive instructions in training your thoughts toward prosperity. You will also be given prayers for your prosperity."

IV

The teaching of the cult is too easily imagined to be described at length. It has, however, evolved a philosophism all its own. A subscriber to *Unity Magazine* delivers himself of this characterization, which is later endorsed by the editor:

> Unity seems to teach that the body is God and that you cannot be sick, because your body, being God, cannot be sick. . . . Theologically described, Unity is essentially materialistic pantheism.

And yet it outstrips Paulism in its Christian fervour. The whole effort of the doctrine expounded by Unity is directed toward making an outworn Christianity acceptable to unhappy Americans who would like to be physically fit and financially sleek. It presents a complete and positive denial of reality, glorying in the inequalities of the present order because these merely give God the opportunity that comes in man's extremity. It advertises for and fairly longs to get at the victims of a heartless society and to teach them the sophistry that all unhappiness and misfortune derives from the one failure to think beautiful thoughts.

That is the practical content of its eminently practical dogmas, but Unity thought never for one moment stops there. It overreaches the lowly mark of prosperity and sets for us a beatific state in which we can become American yogis, with the whole of unfriendly nature at our command. Its highblown view of bodily immortality is,

I should say, the hallmark of Unity. Reincarnation, which the cult now teaches in its Kansas City meetings, will cease when the followers of Unity have overcome death, as they will in due time. Dr. Fillmore, speaking through one of his many organs, has this to say of the resurrection of Jesus:

> Jesus raised his body to the fourth dimension. Every cell of his organism became a purified monad. . . . He has prepared a place for us in the heavens, the omnipresent ether.

All of us are one day to become actual Christs, with his power of the resurrection. As Dr. Fillmore words it:

> When we follow him in regeneration our bodies will not know death; we shall become so spiritual that we shall live in the spiritual ether with Jesus; this is the great and final resurrection.

In view of this guarantee of personal and bodily immortality through the mastery of Truth, those who have paid their subscriptions to Unity periodicals for one hundred years in advance are merely expressing ordinary religious faith.

Unity has always been deft to pick up popular terms for its credo and has made liberal use of the catch phrases of the new philosophy and the new psychology. In each issue of *Unity Magazine,* the International Sunday School Lesson is carefully outlined from the Unity point of view. Every passage is interpreted symbolically. Hence, Jerusalem is not a city; it "signifies the heart centre of the individual consciousness." We are much too simple when we regard Samaria as a land of gentiles, for Samaria signifies the highest point of the intellectual perception of Truth, or the department of objective consciousness that functions through the head." In one of the lessons, this question is propounded: "Explain metaphysically Peter's preaching in Samaria." Answer: "It symbolizes the faculty of power operating according to its highest standards, in union with the inspired understanding in the head, or objective consciousness, and therefore operating most effectively." Peter was a fish-

erman, and "a fisherman is symbolical of a consciousness that is open to and seeking new ideas."

Thus it is that with much wind and high sales pressure the Unity School of Christianity serves the multitudes. It gets results. It offers a philosophism that sounds well and works better. It has demonstrated its success through the millions of adherents who have been swept into the paper fold. Underpinning its vast machinery are of course the cases in which it has cured disease of every sort and its glib promise of physical immortality to its followers. But the machinery in not to be despised. We have in Unity an enormous mail order concern dispensing health and happiness on the large scale of modern business enterprise. It is mass production in religion and its work is carried on shrewdly and systematically, with infinite pains to capitalize upon the old demand and extend the market. It is the work of a retired realtor and his inspired wife, and with its tedious array of tabular facts and its insufferable efficiency, it suggests pretty well what Americans want in the realm of the spirit.

XI

BAHAISM[1]

I

No cult bears a gospel better suited to the temper of our times than the Bahai. Like all cults, it is not a cult. "It is not a man-made movement," says one writer, "it is the Cause of God." Having this distinctive feature, it proclaims itself the fulfillment of "that which was but partially revealed in previous dispensations," for its one million adherents are convinced that "in Baha'u'llah, according to his explicit text, the Message of God has been revealed to mankind in its fullness and universality." Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus, Mohammed and Confucius are not to be despised, for they played their trifling parts in the preparation of the world for the Advent of the "Most Great Peace." But every one of them, when all is said and done, was but a voice crying in the wilderness. It is to that last manifestation of God, Baha'u'llah, that the world should pay final tribute: in him it will find everything that the Christians all along have thought they had in Jesus—a solution to every perplexity which confronts man here below. "Baha'u'llah bestowed upon humanity a perfect model and criterion for truth, first, in His own life, then in His written teachings."

Such is the belief and the messiah of Bahaism, a movement which has since the opening of the present century swept the United States like influenza. In Bahaism we have no neurotic appeal based upon thaumaturgy, but a

[1] Reasonable consideration of the printer has prevented my using throughout this chapter the now recognized forms of spelling of the various names used. For instance, Bahais is correctly written Bahá'i s; Baha'u'llah is accented Bahá'u'llah. Except for the standardization given in the recently compiled Bahai Yearbook (1926), I have been unable to find any two writers, even within the sect, who spelled all the names alike.

quiet sect addressing itself purely to the social conscience and intellectual spirit of the hour. Even so, its strides have been enormous. On the shores of Lake Michigan there stands—just the least bit abjectly, to be sure—a monster temple to the Cause, not yet complete, but well on the way, and for its constructions contributions had been received, as early as 1910, from sixty American cities. By now there is hardly an urban centre where there is not a Bahai center, and of the one million devotees throughout the world, no small percentage are to be found between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Its spiritual assemblies have sprung into being like towns in the Texas oil field, its literature in America is abundant and informing, and it continues to go about its work in that quiet, earnest way which is supposed to characterize the efforts of anarchists and agents of Mexico in the United States.

This new religion is Mohammedan in parentage, and in that respect differs from other Eastern faiths which have in recent years sicced the hounds of heaven on the materialistic heathen of western civilization. Its history is so concentrated and eventful that its origins seem lost in the corridors of antiquity, but as a matter of fact James K. Polk had not yet taken the oath of office in America when the John the Baptist of the faith arose in Persia. On May 23, 1844, a radiant youth of Persia announced himself as the Bab, which doesn't seem startling at all to any American who knows nothing of the Shiite sect of the Twelve Imams, of which Persia is the stronghold. The Shiites believed that the Twelfth or last Imam never really died, since it is unthinkable that the world should be without an Imam. Hence the belief runs that he is still living in the mysterious city of Jabalusa, surrounded by faithful followers and at the end of time he will issue forth and "fill the earth with justice after it has been filled with iniquity." The last Imam disappeared from mortal ken in A. H. 329 (A. D. 940–1), and for the first sixty-nine years after his disappearance, there was communication between him and his earthly followers through four successive intermediaries or gates—the last one of whom refused to appoint a successor. It was not

until A. H. 1260 (A. D. 1844) that the Persian youth announced himself as the Bab, or gate, and thus restored the long suspended communion between the people and the hidden Imam.

The story of the Bab is short and tragic. He aroused the ire of the local clergy, was confined to prison and martyred in 1850 at Tabriz.[2] It was his function, according to the Bahai advocates, to "proclaim the coming of the Mighty Educator, the One longed for by all peoples." At any rate, he gathered a large following about him and these suffered persecution as fierce as Mother Ann and the Shaking Quakers endured in America fifty years before. These followers were known as the Babis, naturally enough, and would still be known by that name if it had not been for the rise of the Mighty Educator. Here the story grows at once confused and interesting, for the Bahai literature tells us that "Baha'u'llah took up the torch after the Bab's death" and the "Babis movement was fulfilled in the Cause of Baha'u'llah." On the other hand, Edward G. Browne tells us that "before his death the Bab had nominated as his successor a lad named Mirza Yaha."[3] Mirza was a half-brother of Baha'u'llah, thirteen years his senior. In the fifth year of his Manifestation, the Bab had heard of this youth, had taken a liking to him, conferred upon him the title of Subh-i-Ezel and made him head of spiritual affairs. He seemed not particularly well suited to govern, however, and Baha-'u'llah early took over the practical affairs of the cult. For the thirteen years Subh-i-Ezel was recognized as the leader of the Babis, and upon the sudden declaration of Baha'u'llah in 1863 that it was "He Whom God Shall Manifest," internal strife arose among the Babis and no small number of the faithful were killed in the com-

[2] Only a dire conspiracy of circumstances prevented the Bab's having a miraculous delivery from this execution. He received a volley from the firing squad and when the smoke had cleared away he had disappeared. The theory generally given is that the bullets had cut the rope that bound the Bab and left him uninjured. Had he escaped his religion would have been established by a miracle, but he was found a few moments later, brought back, and this time finished with a double volley. See Sir Percy Sykes, *Persia,* p. 128.

[3] See *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.* Edited by James Hastings. Vol. II, p. 302.

petition between the messiahs. From here on the Bahai version of events has it that Subh-i-Ezel was a mere blind and that it was Baha'u'llah the real Saviour all the time. Subh, as the tabloids would call him, had two years of purification for his work, in the judgment of his followers, but his enemies say he merely went off to sulk because Baha'u'llah was in the ascendancy all the while. Not all the Babis flocked to the standard of Baha'u'llah upon his Manifestation, but his Cause gained rapidly while that of Subh petered out. Rapidly the name Bahai came into vogue to designate His followers.

Apparently higher criticism is not encouraged among the Bahai and the story of its origins and relation to Babiism remains the least bit vague. At any rate, we know that Baha'u'llah became its Christ in 1863 and that, for all practical purposes, He took up the torch after the Bab's death. As befits a prophet, He spent the greater part of forty years of His ministry in jail. He was in jail, as a matter of fact, when He made His announcement, and by it "the streams of Jewish and Christian prophecy united with the inner reality of the Muslim Religion." In 1868 He was taken to the Turkish prison town of Akka, where He remained with His family until His ascension in 1892. He was, significantly, a native of the City of Noor (Light) and He began expounding the doctrine of the Bab at the age of twenty-five in the City of Baghdad. Disturbances arose and He left the city and remained alone in the seclusion of the mountains of Sarklau, His whereabouts unknown to all, until He returned to Baghdad and renewed His teachings. There He declared himself for twelve successive days to His immediate followers. He was driven by persecution first to Constantinople, then to Adrianople, and then into the Holy Land to the political prison of Akka, twenty miles from Nazareth and nine miles from Mt. Carmel.

How did Baha'u'llah bring about so great a kingdom? The answer is to be found largely in his letters, or tablets, as they are called in the hifalutin language of the cult. In direst prison conditions he sent the glad tidings to East and West that the day of God had dawned, that

a new and universal cycle had been established, "the age of brotherhood, of peace, of the kingdom of God." This Message, inscribed in tablets and epistles during the forty years of his exile and imprisonment were sent to kings and rulers, to the prophets of the several religions, and to his own followers in response to questions they had addressed to him.

His tablets to the potentates of the earth met with varied response.[4] Queen Victoria, upon reading the tablet, said: "If this be of God it will stand; if not there is no harm done." The Czar sent a special embassy to confer with the Anointed One and upon hearing favourable reports of the old man, Nicholas became "stirred with visions of The Most Great Peace." The attitude of other rulers was not so benign. The Pope met the edict with scorn, whereupon Baha'u'llah sent His Holiness another, warning him that because of his arrogance he would lose his temporal power. Presumably as a fulfillment of prophecy, the French troops were withdrawn from the Vatican in 1870. Frederick III, crown prince of Germany, was careless enough to ignore the tablet sent to him and Baha'u'llah, not receiving so much as an acknowledgment, prophesied that he should never rule over his country. Miss Isabella D. Brittingham observes knowingly that Frederick was crowned on his sick bed and died three months later without having ruled his kingdom a day.

Here, as elsewhere, the fate of Baha'u'llah is depicted as similar to that of Jesus and His announcement of the Kingdom. Like the men summoned to the wedding feast, the rulers began with one accord to make excuses. They failed to heed the announcement of His Most Perfect Presence, and somehow did not take seriously the asseveration that "for the sake of His Eternal Love to His Creatures He had turned His footsteps from the invisible to the visible world, and veiled His Splendour in the Body of the dust." Napoleon III, in fact, read the statement, saying, "If he is a god, I am two gods," but stu-

[4] See *The Revelation of Baha'u'llah,* compiled By Isabella D. Brittingham (Chicago, 1902), p. 21.

dents of history know that this flippant monarch soon met his downfall—an event appropriately prophesied by Baha'u'llah when he heard the emperor's retort.

The teaching of the Bahais derives both from the sacred tablets of Baha'u'llah and from the further doctrine by his successor Abdul-Baha. Here again there is grave need of explicit higher criticism, for Browne tells us that a dispute of great bitterness arose over the accession of Abdul-Baha and that the dispute was so extensive that it affected the babes in the faith in America. Ibrahim George Khayru'llah, who is credited with bearing the message to these shores, championed the cause of Abdul-Baha's rival and claims that his life was threatened as a result. The last will and testament of Baha'u'llah was a trifle ambiguous and it was difficult to determine, since the whole thing was written in Oriental and figurative language, which of his sons was meant to be his successor.

The Bahai tradition is never in doubt, however. It has it that upon His ascension in 1892 he left a testament naming Abdul-Baha as the Head of His Cause, the Interpreter of His teachings and the Promulgator of His Faith. Thus, "the providential spirit guiding and protecting the Bahai Cause from the beginning, centred thereafter in Abdul-Baha." [5] He served as "witness and proof of Baha'u'llah from 1892 until November 28, 1921." He was an adroit propagandist, travelling extensively in Europe and America, lecturing constantly on the tenets of the Cause, and writing more extensively. In his writings the Bahais believe that "the ideals of Christian, Jew and other religionist, of philosopher and scientist, of economist and reformer, are abundantly realized." He visited America during 1911–1913, speaking in thirty-three cities, and, according to the press accounts of the time, the churches of all denominations were thrown open to him. Both the New York *Telegram* and the New York *Herald* commented extravagantly upon his message, declaring that, "unlike the leaders of so many cults, he preached not the errors of the present religions but their sameness." He was a man of executive

[5] *The Bahai Year Book*, 1925–1926, p. 18.

strength, and it is fairly certain that he gave the twist to Bahaism which made it so attractive to the people of the Western world. His writings were always benign, grave, smooth, and full of soft platitudes and exalted ethics. He offered this counsel in his will and testament:

> Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you, show your fidelity unto them, . . . should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls; should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the sincere![6]

As was inevitable, Abdul-Baha was often choked upon the incense of adoration. His every act conveyed, in the judgment of his followers, some grave and astounding significance. Also, he possessed a ruddy strain of mysticism, which lent currency to the mystical importance of his acts. Shoghi Effendi, whom he appointed first Guardian of the Cause (he was his eldest grandson), tells in words dripping with sentimentality of Abdul-Baha's last days on earth. The whole narrative rivals a modern minister's overdrawn and dramatized account of the Passion Week. Shoghi tells us that the old prophet refused to give intelligence of his approaching death even to the immediate members of the family and that he somehow lowered a veil upon their minds which prevented their properly interpreting dreams preceding the last hour. Abdul-Baha said, a few days before the end, "I dreamed a dream and behold the Blessed Beauty [Baha-'u'llah] came and said to me, "Destroy this room!" Now the family mistakenly supposed that this dream injunction was a message to give up sleeping out of doors in the garden and to come into the house. It was nothing of the sort. Shoghi Effendi says: "Afterwards we understood that by room was meant the temple of the body."

Moreover, Abdul-Baha is assumed to have had almost as much to do with the origins of Bahaism as Baha'u'llah. Thornton Chase, in his book, *The Bahai Revelation,* points out that Abdul was born the very hour that the Bab was uttering his declaration and that "the declaration of the Bab and the birth of Abbas Effendi [Abdul-

[6] *The Bahai Year Book,* 1925–1926, p. 30.

Baha] in different parts of the kingdom of Persia at the same time were Forewords of the coming Revelation." Mr. Chase further sees appropriate meaning in the invention of the telegraph about this time, for: "The declaration of telegraphic success in the words, 'What God hath wrought,' flashing out in America on the morning of May 24th, 1844, was the material response and foreword of the new earth to be created for the physical welfare of man in the millennial age about to appear. The spiritual proclamation came from the East, the material answer from the West."

Thus the stars in their courses favoured Abdul-Baha throughout his days. The telegraph was his star of Bethlehem. His utterances, as I have said, resound with platitudes and lofty injunctions which reverberate like distant thunder:

> The corner stone of the religion of God is the acquisition of the Divine perfection and the sharing of His manifold bestowals. The essential purpose of Faith and Belief is to ennoble the inner being of man with the outpourings of grace from on high. If this be not attained, it is indeed deprivation itself. It is the torment of infernal fire.[7]

The worst hell, it seems, that Abdul-Baha can think of is not to have the inner being ennobled. He offers his followers little save mental peace and equilibrium, declaring that all these things must be tenderly pondered among the Bahai, "that, unlike other religions, they may not content themselves with the noise, the clamour, the hollowness of religious doctrine. . . . They should justify their claim to be Bahai by deeds and not by name."

Thus we appear to have in Bahaism a faith which transcends all others. It takes the best of all and brews synthetic faith for modern man. Miss Brittingham, to whose book I have already alluded, believes that the Revelation of Baha'u'llah "is the Revelation which rights all wrong . . . for it comes from the world which rights the wrongs of this one." The beliefs and practices of the cult parallel those of Christianity, yet excel them. Baha-'u'llah, for example, showed remarkable metaphysical

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

aptitude at an early age, and even as a boy he would often astound the learned men with whom he talked. He was the child in the temple many times, giving clear and devastating answers to the most puzzling questions that the Pharisees of Persia could propound. He fulfills all prophecy, even some of those which are supposed to apply to Christ. For instance, take the prophecy in Isaiah 9:6:

> For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Now "many misguided people," says Miss Brittingham, "ignorant of the symbolic language used in the sacred writings, have confounded this passage with the Prophecies relating to the coming of Christ." But Miss Brittingham interprets the passage to mean that Christ declared the prophecy in Isaiah to refer to One who should come after Him. And that One, is of course Baha-'u'llah. So it is that the servants of Baha'u'llah are in these latter days but "cup bearers of the Divine Knowledge to all." Bahaism is "not a new Faith, but faith renewed; not a new Light but Light restored. It is truth rescued from the scaffold and placed upon the throne."

What is truth? another jesting Pilate might ask, and he would lose nothing if he did not stay for an answer. Truth seems to be the essence which rises above the kettle in which the Bahais doctrines boil. It is not exactly those doctrines, for Bahaism, like theosophy, Liberal Catholicism, and the New Thought, enforces no dogmas and offers no superstition to its worshippers. Its teachings are in perfect accord with science. Truth, then, like God, is a spirit. "No man," says Abdul-Baha, "should follow blindly his ancestors and forefathers. Nay, each must see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears, and investigate Truth in order that he may find Truth."

Religion must agree perfectly with science—so perfectly that religion shall sanction science, and science religion.

II

It will be evident from these stated principles how closely allied with the temper of our present mind is the cause of Bahaism. Yet this is not by accident, nor are we to suppose that the Bahai have merely taken advantage of advanced movements and hung their doctrines upon popular beliefs. The very opposite is true. The *Zeitgeist* itself is the fulfillment of prophecy. Carl Scheffler, who has had much to do with the erection of the Bahai Temple at Chicago, asserts that "the progressive movements which have sprung up during the Nineteenth Century have been the instruments of God to make the world receptive to His Cause." Indeed the world has "advanced so far toward the Bahai teachings that we should not be in the least astonished if from now on the people join the Cause in whole groups rather than as isolated individuals." The sign of triumph is night for as someone has aptly said, "If the Bahais do not make the world Bahai, it will, through its own natural development, become so."

The Bahai Year Book for 1926 declares that "the rapidly altering character of human life throughout the world is one of the proofs of the Mission of Baha'u'llah." All great changes of the last eighty years are attributable to the presence of some "Influence felt in the very soul of the world." The history of the Bahai cause is the explanation of that influence.

> It is more than an incident in history. It is clear Light illuminating the spiritual powers to which people consciously or unconsciously now respond. Apart from the Bahai cause, modern world movements and tendencies seem sinister anarchy; but from within the Cause they assume perfect order and fullness of meaning.[8]

The Bahai believe that religion in each cycle discloses a new aspect of truth. Baha'u'llah had the advantage over Jesus, in that he was not prevented from giving His full message. "The written text surviving Him guides the faithful follower into all truth." From His teachings we derive "science, philosophy and teachings on economic

[8] *The Bahai Year Book*, 1925–1926, p. 15.

and governmental problems, as well as ethics and methods of spiritual purification and attainment." The result is that every blessing which may befall us today is probably, however remotely, connected with the Prophet Baha'u'llah. Mr. Charles Mason Remy, another Chicago Bahai, in his book *Bahai Teaching,* announces that Baha-'u'llah antedated the League of Nations by fifty years, for:

> About fifty years ago in the book of Akdas, Baha'u'llah commanded the people to establish universal peace and summoned all the nations to the Divine Banquet of International Arbitration so that questions of boundaries, of national honor and property, and of vital interests between nations might be decided by an arbitral court of justice.[9]

That the Bahai have stood steadfastly for the cause of international peace cannot be denied. But so have the Shakers and the Quakers. What they have done is not so absurd as the reasons they give for doing it. The belief prevails that Baha'u'llah has come to consummate all liberal opinion and all exemplary conduct. His people and His alone are responsible for the progress of our day, and, this being the case, then anything which happens is just as likely as not to be the product of Baha-'u'llah. Possibly Mr. Remy has not read "Locksley Hall," or studied the life of the Buddhist King Asoka, or read the sacred tablets of another Prophet and Teacher, Gautama Buddha, or studied with any care the pacifistic principles of the Carpenter. Bahaism lays claim to all sorts of achievements which are most probably the work of the devil—achievements assignable to the triumph of Bahaism only by the queer reasoning that, since Bahaism happened to be in the world at the same time, it must be responsible.

Hear again the voice from the National Spiritual Assembly of America, speaking through the latest *Bahai Year Book:*

> That spiritual power has been breathed into the soul of humanity in this age which shall remove all causes of difference, misunderstanding, discord, and disagreement—causes resident in customs and institutions

[9] Quoted in the *Bahai Year Book,* 1925–1926, p. 12.

as well as in personal opinions and emotions—and establish the means and methods as well as the desire of unity—is the essence of the Bahai teaching and faith.[10]

Whatever may be accomplished by means of the Church Peace Union or the Young Man's Christian Association may thus be taken as the fulfillment of Bahai prophecy. Indeed it should encourage the brothers and sisters in the faith to know how many infidel agencies are labouring sedulously for Bahai ends.

Not that the Bahai proselyte or claim sole credit for the world's advancement toward Almighty God. Rather they claim one distinctive doctrine, and one alone. That is the oneness of mankind. Overlooking for a moment the fact that theosophy claims the doctrine equally, with a generous extension of it to include the animal world as well, we find in the cult an inclusiveness and beneficence which the Southern Baptists would do well to emulate. "Baha'u'llah submerged all mankind in the Sea of Divine Generosity." He declared that "all are leaves of one tree, flowers in one garden." He taught that all religions are one in their fundamental principles, and that religion must be a cause of love and harmony, for otherwise it is no religion at all. He insisted upon universal peace and international arbitration, upon compulsory education, especially for girls, and equal rights among the sexes. He set forth the need of a universal language looking toward world unity, and in Esperanto his followers have of late seen again the fulfillment of His prophecies.

III

The story of the Bahai in America is the story of Mashriqu'l-Adhkar, the quaint name given to the temple of all nations which the Bahai have been sedulously trying to build in Chicago since 1902. As I have indicated, the movement came to these shores through the good offices of Ibrahim George Khayaru'llah, who married an English wife and was among the first to evangelize the

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

West with the Gospel of the Orient. He lectured on the subject of Bahaism in Chicago as early as 1892, made other excursions about the land at later dates, and finally became a natralized citizen of the United States. Chicago has for ever after been the fortress of the cult in America, though New York rivals the Windy City, and the rivalry between the two bodies of love-worshippers has at times been sharp enough to draw the warning of Abdul-Baha and later of the spiritual Guardian of the Faith.

It must be said to the credit of Chicagoans, however, that they hit first upon the idea of erecting an immense tabernacle and ark of the covenant on American soil. It all began when the Chicago adherents heard of the first Mashriqu'l-Adhkar in Russia. Members of the spiritual committee at Chicago, better known as the House of Spirituality of the Chicago Association, were inspired to "supplicate the Centre of the Covenant, Abdul-Baha" to grant permission for the second Mashriqu'l-Adhkar to be built in America. Supplication was accordingly made, whereupon Abdul-Baha pondered the matter for a while, then on June 7, 1903, a tablet was revealed to him in Acca, saying,

> Now the day has arrived in which the Edifice of God, the Divine Sanctuary, the Spiritual Temple, shall be erected in America.[11]

From the time this tablet was revealed to him, Abdul-Baha became an earnest advocate of the enterprise. Indeed he expressed himself so repeatedly and monotonously on the subject that his whole conduct resembles that of a small town Oklahoma minister urging his board of deacons to erect a new Baptist Church. New Yorkers, naturally enough, raised a divine stink when they heard of the possible enterprise in Chicago, whereupon Abdul-Baha revealed another tablet, exhorting the maidens of the Lord in Gotham to refrain from protest, since the maidens at Chicago had first gotten the idea and begun the structure. He consoled the New Yorkers with the promise that in the future a temple would be erected in every state, with "infinite architectural beauty

[11] *The Bahai Year Book*, 1925–1926, p. 64.

and art, with pleasing proportions and handsome and attractive appearances, especially in New York."

That is one prophecy of the faith that has not yet been fulfilled, but Abdul-Baha, executive that he was, realized all too well the necessity of centring the attention of the converts upon one central spot. Thus he issued messages of love and bore upon all the tremendous importance of the project at Chicago.

In his mind there seemed to attach something of the mystical importance to the erection of the edifice that attaches to the gelatin Cathedral which Bishop Leadbeater of the Liberal Catholics says is erected above the Church during the performance of the Eucharist. Though his writings and conversations indicate this, the suspicion aroused in my mind every time has been that he was American enough to use spiritual appeals for putting over a great project of practical consequence. To Mrs. Helen S. Goodell and Mrs. Ella G. Cooper, both of Chicago, he said:

> *To have it built* is most important. Some material things have a spiritual effect, and the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is a material thing that will have a great effect upon the spirit of the people. Not only does the building of Mashriqu'l-Adhkar have an effect upon those who build it, upon the *whole* world.[12]

On another occasion he said to followers who called to see him in the sanctuary at Acca that the building of the temple would have "a tremendous effect upon civilization." While in Egypt Abdul-Baha assured Mr. Percy Woodcock, also of Chicago, that

> The most important thing in this day is the speedy erection of the edifice. Its mystery is great and cannot be unveiled as yet. In the future it will be made plain.

When he visited Chicago in 1912, Abdul-Baha walked to the Holy Hill where the committee had previously decided to locate the temple, and there placed a common stone in what he calculated would be the centre of the edifice. According to the architects, this stone will have

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 65.

to be moved, but its place has been carefully marked and around it will be raised an appropriate shrine when the whole affair is complete.

It should be evident from the foregoing, and was indeed evident to the followers in Chicago, that their idea was blessed of God and that the enterprise could undoubtedly be accomplished. Writing in *The Bahai Year Book,* Mrs. Corrinne True concludes that "it is manifest that Mashriqu'l-Adhkar is founded on the Rock of Ages, the eternal Word of God, as to its object, location and appropriate time for its erection." Nothing remained then but to get the thing under weigh. Several good tracts of land were selected and the business of finding the choicest spot was at once begun.

The selection of the site was facilitated by one thing —Abdul-Baha had said that the temple must overlook the shores of a lake. It was necessary, then, to look only on the shores of Lake Michigan. The first convention for the business of the temple was assembled in November, 1907. During the course of the convention various plots were considered, a feast served by the Chicago maidservants, as the good ladies of the Cause are called, and the decision made to take fourteen appropriate lots. Funds being low, only two of these were bought, but an option was secured on the remainder. The temple was to be located in Wilmette, a suburb of Chicago, and when completed its towering light, signalizing the unity of all the faiths of mankind, was to shine from its lofty tower out over the waters of Lake Michigan.

Abdul-Baha, seeing that the maidservants were really in earnest, gave his fullest co-operation. He has said, "You have only to begin—everything will be all right." So, having begun, the assumption prevailed that everything would be all right. On Emancipation Day, 1908, a tablet was revealed by Abdul-Baha and translated by his daughter, Monevah Khanum, in which the following was expressed.

Ask every spiritual meeting in the other cities that they will select one and send him, and with these selected ones and those selected from the Chicago meetings, establish a new meeting for the provision of means

of the temple. If this is established with perfect fragrance and joy, it will produce great results. In this new meeting, especially for the establishment of the temple, women are also to be members.[18]

Whether the meeting was established in perfect fragrance and joy is not at all certain, since the edifice is not yet complete and since some of the Bahai have complained that in its present state it resembles a Shaker village of the late nineties. In making his report in 1925, Mr. Carl Scheffler said that the temple in its present state—only the basement is completed and the first floor exterior—had aroused some adverse comment. He goes on to remark anent fragrance that "this is probably a continuation of the opposition which was in evidence when the work was started."

But whatever the present difficulties, they were not foreseen by the Bahai when the temple was begun. For had not the Servant of God assured them that, once having begun, everything would be all right? Another meeting, in response to the injunction of the sacred tablet, was held in 1909, when a corporation was formed under the name of the Bahai Temple Unity and the contract drawn for the remaining lots. At that time there was approximately four thousand dollars on hand and the land values amounted to two thousand dollars. It seemed most probable that this modern answer to the tower of Babel, this symbol which would undo the confusion of tongues and spread oil upon the world's troubled waters, would surely succeed. By 1910, things looked still better. Contributions were received from India, Persia, Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Russia, Egypt, Germany, France, England, Canada, Mexico, and from a little island out in the Indian Ocean, Mauretius. In addition stipends had come from at least sixty cities in the United States. Abdul-Baha himself contributed in a material way, though I have been unable to find from the record just how much he gave.

The year 1913 was good and the indebtedness was taken from the land. After that deterioration set in. In 1920 the Centre of the Covenant admonished his subjects, tell-

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 67.

ing them that what they had planned was far too ambitious and that the cost of it ought to be reduced. Action was taken and the estimated expenditures brought down from an indefinite number of millions—to one million two hundred thousand dollars. This estimate, however, does not include the interior work, which, being symbolical, will be elaborate. The diameter was reduced from 450 to 153 feet. Once a reduction had been made, it was assumed that everything would be all right.

But still the temple stands, and still it fails to have a tremendous effect upon civilization. Its plan, however, is good. It stands as I have said, for the unity of faith throughout the world, and though only the words of Baha'u'llah are to be read therein, its architecture is designed to embrace and unify the beliefs of mankind. It was decided that the most used of the nine entrances of Mashriqu'l-Adhkar should face toward Acca, the Mecca of Bahaism, for it was there that Baha'u'llah spent his inspired years in the misery of a Turkish prison camp and it was there that Abdul-Baha established himself to receive pilgrimages. In order to establish accurately the position and orientation of the most used door, that it might face the Most Great Peace, astronomical observations were made to establish the true meridian through the centre of the Temple.

The whole scheme of the Temple has been ingeniously worked out to symbolize and embody the Bahai revelation. It is claimed to be a house of worship and devotion open to all the people of all the religions of the world, to all races and classes without distinction of creed or colour. Its services are or were to consist of the reading and chanting of the Most Holy Word of Baha'u'llah. The main section is to be surrounded by "accessory buildings of humanitarian intent, and the relation of all these buildings one with another and with the central edifice discloses the relation of organic functions of society with the spirit of religion."

Miss Mary Hanford Ford has been good enough to elucidate the architectural symbolism of the temple in spirited detail. She tells us that it is a perfect nonagan,

with nine doors, nine ribs in the dome, and nine openings on each side. In fact all the dimensional numbers of the temple are related to nine, for nine is the sacred number of Bahaism. In fact the figure nine is actually formed, she tells us of the word Baha, the Glory, because in Arabic, letters are numerical symbols also. B is 2, A is 1, H is 5, and A is 1 again, and "the consensus of all makes nine."

So the nine doors of the temple symbolize the perfect number of paths to God, and thus unity in the Glory of Baha, and the prevalence of 9 in the numerical structure of the temple creates heavenly unity in its vibration.

Multiples of nine are just as important, for Miss Ford has observed that "there are nine openings on each of the nine sides of the temple on the first and second stories, producing the number 81 or spiritually nine." There are also three small doors on each side of the third story, "making 27, or again nine." There are nine columns on the first story, nine buttress ornaments on the second, nine ribs to the great dome, "so that one can never escape the heavenly presence of nine." And since nine represents the number of perfection, the temple "becomes the emblem of perfection more definitely exemplified in the Bahai teaching than ever before."

And we have the words of Abdul-Baha himself to the effect that there is something distinct and mystical about Mashriqu'l-Adhkar. He proclaimed that

Verily the founding of it will mark the inception of the Kingdom of God on earth. It is the evident standard waving in the centre of the American continent.

There is about it something—just what it is, is not perfectly clear, since it has never been completed—that marks it off from all others:

Think not that this temple will be like the hundred thousand gigantic temples you see about you. Know ye [heralds Abdul-Baha] that when the Temple of God shall be built in Chicago it will be to the spiritual body of the world what the inrush of the spirit is to the physical body

of man, quickening it to the utmost parts and infusing New Light and Power.[14]

Here, as in the liturgy of the Liberal Catholics, we have the obvious effort to erect trapeze upon which the angels of the spirit world can do their work, this same machinery for the inflow of divine power from on high. But the eucharistic edifice of Bishop Leadbeater is safer, for it cannot be seen, save by those who have the keenest possible spiritual vision, while the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar of the Bahai at Chicago becomes a symbol of earthliness and futility, if as the symbol of the kingdom, it does not reach to the skies.

IV

The government of the Cause of God is as practical and divinely instituted as that of the first Judges of Israel. To assist the Guardian of the Cause in his manifold duties and responsibilities, and particularly in the promotion of teaching work, Abdul-Baha provided for the group of co-workers to be known as the "hands of the Cause of God." There are, curiously, nine of these, and they are perpetuated by the appointment of the Guardian, with the consent and judgment of the Hands of the Cause of God already functioning. The responsibility for and supervision of the local Bahai affairs is vested in each town in a body known as the Spiritual Assembly. This body, which is limited to nine members, is elected on the first day of the Festival of Ridvan, and concerning its character and functions, Abdul-Baha has written as follows:

> It is incumbent upon everyone [every believer] not to take any step [of Bahai activity] without consulting the Spiritual Assembly, and they must assuredly obey with heart and soul its bidding and be submissive unto it, that things may be properly ordered and well arranged. Otherwise every person will act independently and after his own judgment, will follow his own desire and do great harm to the Cause.[15]

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 61.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 48.

The prime requisites which he lays down as necessary when they take counsel together are

purity of motive, radiance of spirit, detachment from all else save God, attraction to His divine fragrances, humility and lowliness among his loved ones, patience and long-suffering in difficulties, and servitude to His exalted threshold.

There is a National Spiritual Assembly for America and the various enlightened lands where the Cause of the Most Great Peace has already spread. There are also elaborate plans on foot for the formation of an International Spiritual Assembly, "which God hath ordained as the source of all Good and freedom from error." It must be elected by "universal suffrage, that is, by believers." This, when formed, "enacteth all ordinances and regulations which are not to be found in the explicit Holy Text."

Horace Holley, who speaks frequently in New York on subjects of interest to the Bahai, sees in this method of government a completely "successful reconciliation of the usually opposed claims of democratic freedom and unanswerable authority." There is, he points out, no hired clergy and no internal factionalism. In the Bahai cause we are actually witnessing the fulfillment of that strange and cryptic saying, "The meek shall inherit the earth." Not only are the prophecies of the Cause itself fulfilled. For good measure, it fulfills the prophecies of all other faiths.

XII

KU KLUXISM

I

WHEN the Klan last lifted its ugly head to the consternation of American liberals, it was variously condemned and derided. Long essays were written to show that it bred racial hatred, others to show that it hoisted the flag of rebellion and the insignia of a super-state, and still others to labor the obvious fact that it was prompted by the avarice of a few and that it fed upon the commercial gain of many. The New York *World,* relying for its information very largely upon an apostate Captain Fry, who had stood high in the councils of the holy order, conducted one of its courageous investigations, and the substance of its findings was that the Klan was a menace. Congress undertook one of its feeble inquiries, and of course got nowhere.

But all the writers of that hysterical hour, with one or two notable exceptions, failed to see what in this later day has become a fact of first importance and no dispute, namely, that the Klan was a religion. It was the religion of the war-time mind, the vehicle by which the intensified emotions of the war period expressed themselves in America. Its psychology was fundamentally religious and it required no adroit use of the documents to show as much. That it had its commercial aspect is true, but that aspect was no more important and certainly no more nearly an explanation than the commercial aspect in any religious organization. The higher-ups can make no money out of a religion unless the lower-downs believe in it. It offered a source of revenue, to be sure, but only because it could capitalize certain imponderables.

It was political, I grant, but only as the Methodist Church is political. For it was not by accident that the Church and the Klan were so closely allied in every hamlet and crossroad. The Knights of the Ku Klux Klan made a creed of Americanism, and transformed political ideas into religious dogmas; it transmuted what commonly passes for politics into religion of the most frantic and frenzied sort. Under its reign we became a chosen people, led of God for the salvation of humanity and appointed to do a thing the Jews had failed singularly to do two thousand years ago.

Of these facts there can be no doubt as the study of the record proceeds. For America the war ended much too soon. We were avid for blood as early as 1916, we entered and began to perform the ritual of hate as early as 1917, and after that the war was never more than a ritual to us. We never felt its reality. We had all the joys of war with none of its unsavoury details. It remained a vague and far-off drama to the vast majority of us, who spent our time selling thrift stamps before large gatherings of people or laying our sons upon the altar in the manner of Abraham. It was all a rather weird and unreal performance. We never saw the enemy; everything was impersonal; we were told that a certain amount of our money would kill a certain number of Germans, but the process of killing by such indirect means was extremely unhealthy and unsatisfying. We lived in a world of fancy, of an imagined terror, of a distant and inhuman enemy engaged in a conspiracy to upset our homes and wreck the virtue of our womanhood. We grew psychopathological in our suspicions and were ready to pounce heavily upon the stolid German farmer if he did not renounce his fatherland and take up the cause against these monsters who sought to destroy us. We wrestled, not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers of the air, and against the rulers of darkness.

It was a drama of complete unreality in which the greater part of our hundred millions of more or less patriotic souls participated. The Klan could never have

risen in France, for France tasted the dregs of the cup; there was no romance and vagueness in her hatred. With us it was different. I recall quite vividly my own experiences, which were, I regret to say, typical of the most of my young fellow Americans. I was too young for actual service in the camps, but I was old enough to make speeches for Liberty Bonds and War Savings Stamps. I traversed the country, pleading with people to give their all. The War was fought out for me in the daily press and on the scoreboard which the Rexall Drug Company had been good enough to erect in its show window. Standing on the walk outside, I could inhale the aroma of the fountain—that always gave me a sense of luxury and peace—and at the same time see the manner in which millions of men tugged back and forth across the miniature battlefields of France.

The psychology resulting from absentee participation cannot be studied too closely. We were never in the War, except vicariously. We had seats at the back of the arena and we consoled ourselves that these cost us a lot of money. All of our emotions went into the air; our hatred found nothing upon which to vent itself during the actual conflict—with the lamentable exception of a few Reds, whose houses we painted yellow. And the interesting thing is that we kept up this drama of the emotions for about eighteen months. All the while our feelings grew tenser and all the while the feeling of cosmic heebie-jeebies gained by leaps and bounds. When the war closed we were just worked up to the proper pitch. We were, if I may change the figure to one that illustrates our state of mind and body better than any other, tumescent. We had indulged in wild and lascivious dreams. We had imagined ourselves in the act of intercourse with the Whore of the world. Then suddenly the war was over and the Whore vanished for a time and we were in a condition of *coitus interruptus*.

What was the result? We made a religion of our hate. We made a God of Uncle Sam and doctrines of our national beliefs, and we found devils for our new religion

among the Jews, the Catholics, and the Negroes. If there had been no Jews, Catholics, or Negroes, we would have found others to have served our purposes just as well. I may anticipate the actual record enough here to point out that the Catholics and Jews and Negroes were assigned evil significance quite cosmic in character. The Jew we hated was not so much Ikey who came for the old clothes as his rich and essentially unreal brother who controlled the movies of America and sought to induce our maidens into a net of prostitution; he was a giant conspirator who would denude the land of morals. The Catholics were ordinary folks as a whole and we had no actual hatred of them; it was the Pope (the dago on the Tiber) that we hated, and his damned scheme to supplant the stars and stripes with the crucifix and place his boney hand upon the national heart. Nor was it the black woman who cooked our meals that made us in the South hate the Negro. We hated something more than the Negro: we hated the idea of him, the possibility that he might become a national menace and a threat to our racial solidarity.

When the War closed I was in a small provincial Texas village studying history and politics. When we got the news everyone of us good Methodists turned to savages, and with the blanket approval of the authorities. Even the girls were let out of their dormitories and all of us went down to the square where we danced, not together of course, around a burning effigy of the Kaiser. That, I believe, is what the War meant to the great portion of our citizenry. It meant first intensification and then release of emotion—nothing more. Everything was done in effigy, and the result was a new religion. With us in this state the recrudescence of the Klan was inevitable. It came—and its real growth began of course in 1919—not as the result of the high sales ability of Edward Young Clarke, but as a result of the very deep and vast need in our own fevered souls for some kind of continuation of the ritual of the imaginary which we had been accustomed by more than eighteen months of systematic training in imaginary hatred and ferocity and

bravery. We had assumed, to the immense satisfaction of ourselves, the role of saviour of humanity. It was a role which we could not easily relinquish, particularly since we had developed so acute a sense of danger for our beloved land and its ideals.

The War itself was fought idealistically. We waged it in our minds and around fortresses which were the protection of everything dear to us. We were not only emotionally but mentally prepared for Kristianity. We fought not the Germans but the Hun; we entered not for selfish aggrandizement but for the protection of human life and property; we had no ulterior ends to seek but longed for the security of our own and other peoples; we armed to disarm others; we never went to battle with the enemy but launched a crusade for the international righteousness of man. Even the paper by which the government secured our financial co-operation was given a ritualistic and idealistic name. We were not paying taxes to a king; we were buying Liberty Bonds for the emancipation of humanity. Being essentially a naïve people, we could fight only for high and holy motives; whatever may be said of those who put the war across, this much is true: They knew the American mind.

With all this catechism and consecration we disciplined ourselves to think of ourselves as a people peculiarly ordained of God to lead humanity to the Promised Land. We were ready for the final Confirmation which the Klan performed for us. We had been spared the depletion which befell England, the devastation that was France's, and the revolution that was Russia's. What we had was not what Italy had, nor what Russia had, but a sort of glorified Sunday School picnic, a religion which went off in the air and carried on satisfactorily the international drama of idealism to which we were accustomed. And by the strange alchemy which this national religion wrought, the ideals which made us the friend of oppressed peoples in other lands during the war made us the enemy of the oppressed within our own land after the War was over.

II

The first and original Klan in the South followed upon the heels of a war. It sprang from that peculiar state of mind in which a people finds itself after the enemy has been destroyed or else has called off his hounds. The sense of crisis invoked by a war never ends with what is roughly called peace. It persists long afterward and demands a vehicle of one sort or another to express the aroused fears of the populace. These fears were gigantic and real to the Southern people, and they found in the Klan an instrument admirably suited to their purposes. The old Southern Klan was at first simply a fraternal order.

In May 1866 a group of young fellows with time hanging heavy on their hands now that the war was over decided to organize a club. These young men had gathered in the back of a law office in the small but relatively cultured town of Pulaski, Tennessee, not far from the Alabama line. A club which would have some mystic significance appealed heartily to the assembled swains and of course the next step was to select a name. Among the names suggested was "Kukloi," the plural of "Kuklos," the Greek word for circle. "Ku Klux" a barbarization of the word Kuklos was suggested and at once adopted.[1] The word Klan was of course added to carry out the alliteration, and soon the name Ku Klux Klan got into currency. It was for a time nothing but a circle of young Southerners who met for purposes about as important as those which generally convoke Elks from their homes. But, suited as it was to the psychology of the period and meeting the demands of secrecy, it soon grew into an agency of social regulation, in which its regalia and mysterious practices became the religious machinery for the control of politics and morals.

It may be that the Reverend William Joseph Simmons intended that the revived Klan should take the harmless form of a body of hooded Elks—a fraternal order pure

[1] James Moffatt Mecklin, *The Ku Klux Klan, A Study of the American Mind,* (New York, 1925), p. 62.

and simple. I have seen the point argued at length but it does not coincide with the Emperor's own testimony or with the ceremonious inauguration which the new Klan enjoyed. Mr. Ward Greene, a newspaper man of Atlanta, is authority for the claim that William Joseph started out to found a drinking club for Georgia politicians. How much truth there is to this contention, I cannot say. Some credence is lent to it by the fact that for several years before the establishment of the new order the Emperor tramped about from village to village in the South organizing lodges for the Woodmen of the World and pepping up those already organized.

But William Joseph Simmons had also been a preacher. In common with most of our political reformers he was drawn from the pulpit and he carried over into his new activities the vocabulary and methods of thought that had marked his profession. He claims that he nurtured in his breast for fifteen years the idea of the Ku Klux Klan, that he worked diligently for those years to get into a position wherefrom it might be organized. His crowning ambition from boyhood, he says, had been to organize the real American citizens into a great army of righteousness. As early as 1901 he was startled by a great vision of America's need. This vision took place actually and in the skies. He was seated on a bench outside the door of his cottage. At that time he was an impecunious preacher in Alabama, first of one church, then of another. Without premonition of any sort he suddenly beheld this ominous and at the same time beatific vision in the heavens. A deep blue sky was overhung with light clouds, and as he beheld them they suddenly took on meaningful shape and began to move rapidly across the sky. They changed shape with the volatility of all clouds —now they were like a weasel, perhaps, and now like a walrus—but as he gazed intently upon them there came to the seer the unmistakable picture of long rows of horses galloping upon some purposive chase. Too, there were white-robed figures on the steeds. All in all the vision vouchsafed him was that of a vast and richly clad army of mounted men—the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan re-

born and reanimated to save America from the alien crisis which even in those days threatened her hegemony.

Falling to his knees, William Joseph Simmons offered a prayer of wonder and gratitude to God for the vision he had seen. That vision he never forgot. He had been commissioned then and there—as certainly and as authentically as Joseph Smith had been—to found a national order which should save humanity from its sin of un-Americanism and preserve all that was near and dear to the heart of our citizens.

"In the year 1915," he says, "I was sufficiently prepared, in head and heart, to make a start on my life's mission—to me a most sacred and holy mission." [2] On Thanksgiving night of that year he took sixteen intrepid spirits with him to the crest of Stone Mountain, near Atlanta, and there "on the top of a mountain that night at the midnight hour while men braved the surging blasts of wild wintry mountain winds and endured a temperature far below freezing, bathed in the sacred glow of the fiery cross, the Invisible Empire was called from its slumber of half a century." A reporter for the New York *World* was unkind enough to consult the records of the Weather Bureau and found that the lowest temperature recorded that night was forty-five degrees. But let that pass. Here in a mystical ceremony, from the mind of a mystic, the new Klan came into existence.

The account given by the egregious Hiram W. Evans is even more fascinating to the observer of religious psychology:

> At midnight, Thanksgiving, 1915, sixteen men, who had braved the chilling wind and cutting sleet, stood about an altar on the summit of Stone Mountain, DeKalb County, Georgia. The altar, comprising sixteen boulders dropped into their places from the shoulders of the weary pilgrims, had spread upon it the American Flag, and on the Flag lay the Holy Bible—open at the twelfth chapter of Romans. At the conclusion of the ceremony. which declared that the Bible and the Flag should be for ever paramount in their hearts and lives, and in the wholly binding oath they had then and there taken, the men silently and reverently descended the mountain and worked their way back to

[2] William Joseph Simmons, *America's Menace or the Enemy Within* (Atlanta, 1926), p. 66.

the world—from which they had been temporarily, but completely, separated.[3]

We have already seen that the Klan was born in a vision, that it came from a man trained in theological formulae, and that it arose in his mind at a time when nothing but the most imaginary danger threatened America. There were, to be sure, wars and rumours of wars. He was a typical provincial American who had heard of Europe, and had read a great deal about its evils. He was enveloped down in Alabama by a vague haze of insecurity, and God set before him elaborate enginary to dispel that haze. His first act afterwards was an act of religious devotion. When he founded the Klan he was ready to launch a "most sacred and holy mission." And he launched it, not in the back of a saloon, but on the mountain top—up where Moses got the Ten Commandments and Jesus took his favourite disciple for the transfiguration. Going there was essentially a religious act. The symbol which he selected—the fiery Cross—was a religious symbol, and even the exaggeration of the temperature has about it some of the overstatement and dramatization that is to be found in all sacred writings. The ritual he had contrived in the interim, as we shall have plenty of occasion to see, was a purposely contrived religious ceremony.

The men who went up into the mountain were called apart from the rest of mankind for a service of mystical importance. They knelt before an altar. They saw there one sacred symbol, the open Bible, which in turn gave sacredness to the other by the side of it, the flag. They went as "pilgrims" with "weary shoulders"; they wrought their altar through sacrifice. They performed an act of consecration and then descended the mountain purified and animated for service among their fellow

[3] H. W. Evans, Imperial Wizard, *The Klan of Tomorrow and the Klan Spiritual*, p. 17. At the end of the pamphlet containing it are these words: "During the delivery of this address the great audience of men sat in silence, as though entranced. At its conclusion the Klonvocation arose quietly and stood in reverential spirit. Someone started "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and the song was joined in by the deeply impressed men." This at the Klonvocation of 1924 at St. Louis.

mortals. What they did and thought that night set the pace and formula for the whole behaviour of after-war America.

In the light of these facts it will pay us to look into the mental apparatus and habits of the man who made the Klan. Simmons occupies the same relation to the Klan that Mrs. Eddy did to Christian Science and Pastor Russell to the preposterous sect he created. Edward Young Clarke may have sold the Klan and Hiram W. Evans may have stolen it, but William Joseph Simmons started it. Clarke had something to sell—and that something was an immensely satisfactory system of religion which provided Americans who were hoeing corn and beating carpets for Mother with a means of continuing the righteous excitement that they had found so pleasurable a year or two before.

The highly emotional thinking that the Emperor is capable of doing is best seen in a book which he wrote in 1926. In this book, *America's Menace or the Enemy Within,* he offers a forthright statement of what he intended the original Klan to be. It is a vindication of the Klan before Evans got his dental hands upon its throat, and it offers the reader a thoroughly varnished statement of the Klan principles and a perfect example of the type of mind that conceived the monstrosity known as the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

Simmons's style must not be overlooked. He is a spellbinder of the first water and he can hardly write a sentence that does not read like a solemn statement from a ritual. Every paragraph resounds with symbolic phrases calculated to invoke the blessings of the patriotic Holy Ghost. There is thunder in every sentence, and one does not marvel, after reading this book, that the principles of the Ku Klux Klan fell sweetly upon the ears of stammering Americans left with a lot of hate and energy on their hands just after a rather hilarious and all too brief period of war.

On the title page is this quotation:

> He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness.

There follows a portrait of Simmons and underneath it are these words:

> He Who Traversed the Realm of the Unknown, Wrested the Solemn Secret From the Grasp of Night and Became the Sovereign Imperial Master of the Great Lost Mystery.[4]

Before we have gone five pages we learn that all things sacred are rapidly slipping from our possession and that "we are wantonly wasting our substance, our holy heritage, in riotous, reckless, ruinous living." There continues the same type of expression with which the Emperor lashed the patriots to service in the good old days of 1919–1920—the same reference to crouching monsters ready to devour us. As Professor John Moffatt Mecklin points out in his book, *The Ku Klux Klan: A Study of the American Mind,* Simmons has a "singular ability to insinuate himself into the sympathies of the average man of the middle class, and to play upon his likes and dislikes."

This accounts in no small measure for the success of the Klan Kreed as he formulated it. He was able to say in highfalutin language what the average carpenter imagined; he gave reality to unrealities and divine significance to vain imaginings. He is the American mind working at its best and with a sufficient vocabulary and fluency to convince itself of the truth of what it claims to believe.

It gives us a sort of pleasant shiver to learn that our country is "sorely beset and imminently imperiled"; and I confess myself not immune to the picture he draws when he says:

> Dangers dire and deadly are covertly crouched on all sides desirous of devouring it [our country]. Insidious evils, stealthily creeping in, are subtly establishing themselves in strategic positions in preparation for the day of America's doom.[5]

There is a picture that no village hoodlum could resist if he had just been hating the Germans. It carries

[4] Simmons, *op. cit.*
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

extraordinary power because it doesn't mean a thing. It gives us the pleasant sense of danger without anything really ugly to look at or run from. Our danger, the ex-Emperor goes on to say, is "not from the bristling bayonets of hostile battalions nor bulging barrels of belligerent battleships of any other nation; but it is the more certain and effective danger of internal disintegration." In other words, to the sophisticate, there is no danger at all, but to the average man who can get excited over the alliterative rhetoric of the Emperor, there is a danger far more real than any physical threat. The average man feared something at the end of the war. He didn't know just what it was, and that made him all the more frightened. Simmons, with his caparisoned steeds and the twelfth chapter of Romans, lent religious meaning to that fear, and consequently righteous justification. He transformed fear into the courage of a holy war. To him the arch fiend is an abstract idea which he terms the "persistent, penetrating poison of pernicious 'alien' propaganda." He calls upon people to fear "the wild trained anarchists from the precincts of Petrograd or the Provinces of Poland." Politics he makes "the sacred science of good government," and "pacificist propaganda" he dismisses as "perilously poisonous." "America today has not a friend without, and millions of enemies, positive and potential, within." The whole outlook for the land is rather gloomy; "With religion ruined; politics permanently polluted: amusement perverted: music mutilated; literature poisoned; and character corrupted; in unrighteous revelry America will crumble into chaos." The only hope lies in the gathering of the Klan, "the prompt assembling of the uncontaminated and true American citizenry." [6]

That is Simmons's philosophy in his own nutshell. And though these words and the book from which they are taken were written in 1926, they express in cogent form the ideas which lay in the mind of the man who founded the Klan. In the circular, *The Ku Klux Klan Forever,*

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 43, 44.

which the Emperor wrote before he was unhorsed by the cunning Texan, Simmons spoke of the Klan as follows:

> To destroy it is an impossibility, for it belongs in essence to the realms spiritual. . . . Attuned with Deity, functioning only for all humanity's good, misjudged by ignorance, misunderstood by many, slandered by prejudice, sweeping on under the divine leadership of Deity, it never falters and will never fail.

His own mind, as it expresses itself in the Klan and in reference to it, is that of a colossal religious maniac, the mind of a man who even goes so far as to take on some of the attributes of Deity and speak of himself in the language which is generally associated with only the sacred writings of the Christian faith. He tells in this book *America's Menace* of his struggles to launch the Klan properly when he started in 1915. There were attempts to steal it, but they failed. Then came the attack of the newspapers, the pack led by the New York *World,* "but the virtue of the Klan came through perilous persecution, untarnished and intact." The government itself took up the perilous persecution, but to no avail, for all humanity by that time had sought and found "their heart's desire, peace of mind, security of hope, and opportunity of concerted service beneath the sacred glow of the Fiery Cross."

These attempts on the part of the evil one having failed, Simmons says the "enemy thought he could get control of the Klan by buying ME." And in strangely familiar language he continues: "He offered me the Kingdoms of all the States of the United States and the glory of them, if I would bow down and worship them." [7] This failed too and then the conspiracy to replace him with Hiram W. Evans succeeded and the divine agency which Simmons had given to humanity was transformed at once into a thing of evil designs and terror.

Note the language and manner in which the former Emperor speaks of the Klan and the sacred substance it contains. To him it was more than an organization, more than the most important organization in the world. It

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 76.

was an Ark of a Covenant with God, containing specially distilled and etherealized mysteries which he alone could convey to humanity. When he saw that he must retire from leadership and that the child he had conceived and nurtured would be taken from him, he said:

> I was in Gethsemane, and the gloom of its dense darkness entombed me; the cup which I drank surpassed bitterest gall, and my sweat was the sweat of blood; the hour of my crucifixion was at hand.[8]

The analogy between his death and that of Another he pushes even further, for he points out that he was crucified on the cross of cupidity and that he was betrayed by friends.

The result is that the hungry multitudes have been given a stone and they long to have their "father in Klankraft feed their starving souls with the true bread of life." He had only begun to establish the real mysteries of the order when it was taken away from him; he could not give all because the people were not prepared. He had never communicated real Klankraft to his followers, and no one but him today knows the "sublime loftiness" of its "mystic philosophies." And then follows this amazing passage:

> I am the door of Klankraft; no man can enter therein but by ME. If any other door is offered, the same is a cheat and a swindle and he who offers it is a thief and a robber. I am the way, the truth and the life in the kingdom of Klankraft, and no man can come into the REAL Klan but by ME: for I alone have the TRUE word; and my very soul yearns to gather the real Americans together, as a hen gathers her brood and direct them onward and upward to the blissful consummation of their highest and fondest hopes.[9]

And with ringing tones he enjoins those who have gone off after Evans:

> Come unto ME all you who yearn and labour after Klankraft and I will give you rest. Take my program upon you and learn of me, for I am unselfish and true at heart. . . . I am the one custodian and sole Master of the sublime Mystery.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 104.
[9] *Ibid.*, p. 101.

The program to which he alludes in this last passage was conceived as much in religious fervour as the ideas which he expresses about his personal messiaship. It looked to the establishment of five great universities throughout the length and breadth of America, in which young men and women could properly be taught the truth about American history. Simmons himself was for a time professor of history at Lanier University, Atlanta. To supplement the school system was to be a mammoth scheme for the production of sound textbooks on history, written by reverent souls who would tell the Truth. It was, as he says, the greatest schoolbook program ever comtemplated. It was to include books for use all the way from the kindergarten to graduate studies—all to be produced by patriotic Americans and all to sell at a saving of from 25 to 50 per cent. This corps of workers was to prepare a true history of America, "beginning with the true discovery of America by Lief Ericson, in the year 1,000, and continuing to the present time and throughout the future." Beyond these agencies there was to be a gigantic banking and trust institution for the aid of starving farmers, evidently intended either to supplant or supplement the Federal Reserve, and a fatherly system of providing young Klan husbands with homes for their new wives. There was also to be worked out a method of supporting all Klan orphans and a chain of hospitals was to be established, in which could be procured the services of the best physicians, gratis.

These humanitarian enterprises were to be crowned by still another and that had to do with a stupendous religious crusade. Simmons looked to the solidarity and unity of American Protestantism in the pursuit of evangelical Christianity and in "the evangelization of men."

And it would have meant the establishment in every city of a great Klan Kathedral, "whose doors would be open to all who wanted to enter to worship and receive spiritual strength." Each of the services in these Kathedrals was to be distinctly evangelical, for, in the belief of Simmons, "evangelism, shorn of denominational and sectarian confusion, is the hope for America's soul."

III

I have sketched in brief the program which Emperor Simmons had in view for the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and have given some indication of his manner of thinking about it and presenting it. If ever there was a self-anointed messiah, it was Emperor Simmons, and if ever there was a malignant religious kult, that kult was the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan.

Now just what was the net effect of these mystic philosophies once they got going among the tenant farmers and decadent whites of the provinces? The answer has been given in the excess of cruelty and sadism which the Klan loosed on this continent. It offered the average klodhopper a chance to escape his sense of impotence by waging a colossal war against foreign and cosmic principalities for the preservation of what he supposed to be dear to him. The torturous and inquisitorial methods of the Klan were the direct result of its mystic philosophies, particularly since these conveyed the feelings which most after-war Americans had in their stomachs. As Frank Bohn in the *American Journal of Sociology* for January 1925 phrases it:

> To organize healthy, sturdy, adventure-loving young men, half of whom have just been mustered out of the army and navy; to fire their hearts with the thought that their beloved country is in imminent danger; and then to expect them to be satiated by repeating the Klan ritual twice a month, surely that was expecting to pluck figs from thistles.

What happened was that the Klan, having no actual enemies, created enough foes in the air to keep their courage up and then turned to any obstreperous man or element who displeased them. The Klan first universalized, then localized danger. Bohn also tells of encountering an impecunious farmer in the middle of Ohio who felt that the country was in a state of unprecedented danger, that the Jews were carrying off young girls to become white slaves, that they were controlling the movies, and that the Pope was daily making inroads on Washington. He was obsessed with the fear that the Klan might

have come too late and that the country might already be irretrievably lost. It was a mythical Jew and a symbolical Catholic that this man feared and hated. The Jews as a race became devils, and everything from a profiteer to an anarchist was regarded as a Jew. Then, after the concept had been made sufficiently general to inspire alarm throughout the countryside, the Klan easily localized it and came to hate the Jews and Catholics in each community. That is why I say that the Klan was not essentially a prejudice-mongering organization bent maliciously upon the destruction of Jews, Negroes and Catholics. It was first and foremost a religion, and like all religions it had its devils. These devils were abstract monsters—Negro lust and insubordination, Jewish monetary power, and Catholic domination of the government. It was in these broad and effusive generalities that the Klan thought first of its enemies. Then, as I say, it was only a short step from the Pope to the Katholic who set up a delicatessen across the street from one already owned by a Methodist.

It is fairly obvious that the Klan was nearer to being a tribal religion than anything else. It had that narrowness and exclusiveness about it that marks primitive races. For we emerged from the war with the solemn conviction that we were God's Chosen People. That is no figure of speech. It was an actual belief. Hiram W. Evans, in the interview given the Chicago *Daily News* in 1924, said that civilization must be maintained by America and that "national pre-eminence is enjoined upon us by God." We simply had no choice in the matter. If Jehovah had singled us out for service, we were the last people on earth to fail him. It was this belief which prompted much of our humanitarian work, even in liberal circles. Everywhere we heard that America must lead the way. To the pacifist that meant lead the way to world peace; to the Kluxer it meant keep ourselves pure and unspotted from the world. But both the Kluxer and the pacifist were agreed upon the singularity of America's calling.

In *The Landmark,* for April 1924, appeared this explanation:

If the Klan aspires to purify America and make her impregnable, it is not for any selfish reason; selfishness corrodes and destroys the soul; it is in order that America, pure and impregnable, may extend a giant's helping hand toward the people less fortunate.

I should not wish to appear derisive in the use of such quotations. The Klan was founded upon solemn convictions and its postulates were shared by a great many people of high spiritual intentions. But the fact is that we took ourselves to be led of God, and taking that for granted, anything we did seemed to us to be quite in keeping with the divine order of things.

It follows as the day follows the night that our institutions took on a sacrosanct importance and we were ready not only to die for them but to talk about them in the most astounding terms. We were told by one writer that the principles underlying American Government "are spiritual in origin and were given to the people of this country, not by human intellect but by divine authority." These principles, he feels, are divinely inspired, and he continues: "The Constitution of the United States is the greatest masterpiece of judicial literature ever inspired by God and penned by mortal man, outside of the Holy Bible." He charges us to stop the "tide of immigration into our ports and thus increase our spiritual strength, our moral energies and the spirit of brotherly love." The other unfortunate peoples of the earth need the benefit of our "unadulterated national ideals . . . the blessings that flow from a pure and upright national life." [10]

The lengths of exaggeration to which our national mind will go are well evidenced by the following passage from the same author. It has no regard for the facts, and indeed it need not have, for it is the presentation of a religious and imaginary situation. He speaks of European countries in comparison with our own and delivers himself of these remarkable sentiments:

Their land has been stained with bloody wars, ours has been one of peace. Their civilization has been marked with strife and bloodshed; ours has been adorned with peace and tranquillity. Their defense is built

[10] Leroy M. Curry, *The Ku Klux Klan Under the Searchlight,* pp. 129–131.

upon fear and hate; ours has been resting upon love and enlightened conscience. They have fostered class hatred and slavery, while America has maintained equality and liberty. They have been led by materialistic and selfish motives, while we have been led by Spiritual ideals.[11]

And in eloquent conclusion he asks, "Shall we allow the dark cloud that has hung for centuries above European civilization to overshadow America, and with bitter pangs of desolation, pollute the purity of our Christian civilization?"

In the interview given in Chicago during 1924, to which I have already alluded, Evans referred to the Constitution as the Klan's political Bible. He went on to say in more exact terms, however, that "Klansmen stand on the Holy Bible. Upon the Holy Bible rest the American constitution and the American nation. Klansmen are wholeheartedly Christian, implacably opposed to atheistic intellectualism and to all amatory and erotic tendencies of modern degeneracy." It may be urged that Evans here makes use as do all the other fanatics, of what has already found favour with the people for bolstering up his cause. This same may be urged against the use of the Bible which Christian Science and other cults have so abundantly made. But the larger fact seems to be that Evans's mind and the mind of the Klan turn naturally to the Bible as a sacred symbol because they themselves are engaged in a sacred undertaking. Their use of the Bible is not ulterior. It is inevitable.

We must not fail to note that the ritual of the Klan is nothing short of an elaborate liturgy, conceived in the mind of a bigoted religionist and subscribed to by men whose thoughts were constantly upon the lofty things of life. And in swiftly passing I must note that the Klan is, in conception, organization, practice and method, almost the doppelgänger of the Roman Catholic Church. It has the same high regard for pomp and circumstance and prelates and dignitaries and makes the same use of incensed ideas and relic-symbols. It was Americanized Catholicism.

[11] Curry, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

But now about the ritual. The Klan's term Kludd, the word for chaplain, is borrowed from the high priests of the ancient Druids. Its word Kloran, meaning the sacred book containing the ceremonies of the order, is formed by putting an "l" after the "K" in Koran. Thus we have the Kloran of the White American Protestants. Its Opening Klode is sung to the tune of "Greenland's Icy Mountains." There are two long-winded prayers in the order of the Service, one devoted to the Emperor and the other to the success of the Invisible Empire. And the service is closed with "Blest Be the Tie that Binds."

Moreover, the candidate or neophyte is not initiated, but naturalized. There is presumably a changed status induced in him, a sort of spiritual transfiguration. He is ushered into the mystic kingdom by means of a ceremony simulating very closely that of Christian baptism, at least as it is practised among the Methodists and Presbyterians. Captain Fry tells us that the alien is led to the sacred altar, "where rests the American flag, upon which is a Holy Bible, open at the twelfth chapter of Romans, which Simmons says is his 'spiritual charter,' and across the pages of the Word of God is a naked dagger." As the ceremony proceeds and the alien is instructed in the meaning of Americanism, the Exalted Cyclops takes a glass of water and dedicates the alien, setting him thus apart from the common run of his fellows and offering him the opportunity of lofty service in the Invisible Empire. Then, says Fry, a parody on "Just As I Am" is sung "by those of the elect who can carry a tune." Following this the Exalted Cyclops steps forward and pours water on his shoulder, his head, and throws a few drops into the air, making the dedication "in mind, in body, in spirit, and in life." [12]

Even a casual examination of the vocabulary of the order will lead us into a volume of cyclopedic dimensions. It suffices to say that the words used are all symbols, though their suggestions are not always the happiest —witness the word "Kloran." But they are supposed to mean something. The Imperial Wizard is defined in the

[12] Henry P. Fry, *The Modern Ku Klux Klan,* Chapter VII, p. 89–94.

back pages of the Kloran as "The Emperor of the Invisible Empire; a wise man; a wonder worker, having power to charm and control." The days of the Klan calender express its sombre psychology. The days of the week are Dark, Deadly, Dismal, Doleful, Desolate, Dreadful, Desperate—the weeks of the month being Woeful, Weeping, Wailing, Wonderful, Weird. And the months of the year need only to be repeated in a row to stir a mild man to murder: Bloody, Gloomy, Hideous, Fearful, Furious, Alarming, Terrible, Horrible, Mournful, Sorrowful, Frightful, Appalling.

I doubt that many of our learned Bible scholars are aware of the references to the Klan in the actual words of the Holy Writ. If not, it is simply because the enemies of the Klan have been stricken blind and fail to see what is so plainly there. Bishop Alma White of the Pillar of Fire Church in New Jersey has been good enough to trace out these references for us and has embodied the result of her seasoned findings in a book called *The Ku Klux Klan in Prophecy*. It was published as late as 1925 and carries the diocesan imprimatur of Arthur H. Bell, who was at that time Imperial Representative Realm of New Jersey. In granting his approval to the work and commending it to the American public, Father Bell has this to say:

> The book brings out vividly the titantic struggle now taking place, not only in the United States, but over the entire world, and while at the present time the battle raging has not reached a point where swords, bullets and poisoned gas are the weapons used, the time will soon arrive when the Roman Catholic craving for world power will, if not checked, cause a revival of a religious war that will be far more disastrous than the late World War. The ever-increasing insistence of the Roman Catholic hierarchy as to their rights to control nations, is leading to the mobilization of a white-robed Christian army of Protestant men and women who are banded together with an equal determination that our nation at least shall be allowed to function without the dominating hand of any creed or sect. [13]

With that information we are ready to study the Bible in the light of the Klan. This study, unfortunately, is a

[13] Bishop Alma White, *The Ku Klux Klan in Prophecy*, p. 3.

little vague, and the good Bishop must resort for the most part to pictures to get her ideas graphically across. We are treated to a picture of Jesus, or Khrist, as the Bishop would probably have us say, feeding the five thousand. Every mother's son of them has on a robe and hood. The apostles and helpers stand eagerly by to received the bread and fishes, and they too are hooded. The caption reads: "In like manner the truth is being carried to the people by the Ku Klux Klan."

The Good Samaritan appears in a robe, of course. The ass upon which he set the unfortunate man who fell among thieves is shown to be a steed of good parts, properly caparisoned in the regalia of the Klan. The Priest and the Levite, obviously symbols of the Roman Catholic Church, are shown taking to their heels across the rugged country as the Klansman lifts the wounded man into the saddle. Under this picture are printed the words, "The Good Samaritan (K.K.K.)."

And then there is that excellent picture in which the three Hebrew Children are dressed in the robes of the Klan. Even the Jews of Bible days had good Klan traits in them. They refused to bow to the Golden Image, who in the drawing is the Pope, while Tammany and all the others are on their knees. We have here an anomaly. The three Hebrew Children "represent the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan at this period of our national history." It is very much the same anomaly that occurred when the first pictures of the Klan in full regalia were printed throughout America. These pictures, carried by the New York *Times* and other first-rate papers, were not endorsed by Simmons or the authorities. Ward Greene tells us that an enterprising photographer of Atlanta got the drift of the uniform and hired a group at twenty-five cents a man to wear the hood and cowl. It was of this group that the first pictures were made, and the men beneath the robes were Negroes recruited from the bottoms of Georgia.

Bishop White tells us that one must have "divine illumination and prophetic vision to unfold the pages of Holy Writ and give to this generation the truth that is

so necessary at this critical hour." She then proceeds to take all the stories of the Bible and make the heroes Klansmen and the villains either Jews or Catholics. For example, we find in Jonah a universal allegory of that unfortunate race called the Jews. They are "indigestible, inflexible, and unbreakable, as we have proved in the case of Jonah in the stomach of the great fish." And in the illustration which accompanies this shrewd piece of exegesis, Bishop White shows the swarthy sailors of that day, clad in the hood of the Klan, heaving the ill-starred Jonah to the great Fish, which turns out to be America.

We learn further in a relation to modern affairs that the Jews and Catholics are at present in cahoots against the Protestants. "In New York," we find, "it is almost impossible for anyone to do business who has not the mark of the beast on his forehead. There are multiplied hundreds of thousands of White Gentile American women under Jewish bosses in the movies, dance-halls, sweatshops, department stores and innumerable other places, including the white-slave dens." [14] And in the hour of peril the Ku Klux Klan is the "instrument in God's hand to preserve our American ideals and institutions."

And so it goes. We learn of Gideon's army of 100 percenters, as the Bishop calls them, and we are told that they had good reason to work under the cover of night. If, therefore, anyone wants to know why the Klansman wears a mask, "you have only to consult the words of Holy Writ." She goes so far as to call Gideon's men brave Klansmen and she shows her knowledge of religious habits of thought in general by the assertion that there are no words in Holy Writ to support the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. She may know prophecy but she knows pathetically little about what we call human nature.

Even Old Elijah's muscles are swathed in the robes of the order. He is shown, his hood flying and his cowl tilted in the breeze, running before the chariot of state in which the stately Uncle Sam is riding as a sort of Ahab in modern dress. In still another place Bishop White gives us

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 52, 53.

the picture of the American Eagle hovering over the capitol at Washington; in one of its claws is the fiery cross, in the other the Holy Bible. There is a hood and cowl over its beak and a robe over its body. He hovers angrily and threateningly, like an angry mother bird, over a picture of the capitol building and is thrusting his spear (Americanism) into a sinister hand, labelled Rome, which is ready to crush the stately edifice to bits.

I have cited enough to show that Bishop White and the Realm of New Jersey are in earnest. This is no mere sectarian animosity to which she gives expression. The Pope is the Anti-Christ and the Roman Catholic Church is to her powerfully sincere mind the whole host of wickedness. The Klan is no mere agency with a lofty purpose, but an instrument in the hands of God. The patriots which comprise it are "not only custodians of liberty, but of the whole social and moral structure, involving both politics and religion. The Almighty in his wisdom has chosen both men and women of dependable character and is enlisting them under the Stars and Stripes and the Fiery Cross to bring about a transformation for the betterment of Society." As for those who oppose the Klan, they can be set down as follows: "The Roman Catholic Church, together with its military arm the Knights of Columbus, the apostate Jews, some Negroes, former brewers and distillers, bootleggers, rum-runners, white slavers, gamblers, harlots, wife-beaters, thieves, murderers, crooked politicians, lawbreakers generally, and a few honest but misinformed American Protestants." [15] In short, all the emissaries of the Devil, either wilfully or by deception. And as for those who are members, they "are the very best citizens of the United States." Was there ever a more clear-cut demarkation drawn between saints and sinners, sheep and goats?

Let us hear then the conclusion of the whole matter as far as Bishop White is concerned. "If God sees fit to work in behalf of his own cause and Kingdom through an 'In-

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

visible Empire,' it is useless for any man to make a protest." [16] And as for details, why, "The Klan stands for the supremacy of the white race, which is perfectly legitimate and in accordance with the words of Holy Writ, and anything that is decreed by the all-wise God should not work a hardship on the coloured race." [17] From an equally frantic book, called *Christ and Other Klansmen,* we have this tit-bit: "The man who fights the Klan is helping sin to reign." For, as the author, Reverend E. F. Stanton, tells us, God is the author of Klanism and "God is Klannish and works secretly."

The material to show the fear psychology and religious symbolism could be multiplied a thousandfold if that were not a work of supererogation. We could note the little booklet called the *K.K.K. Katechism,* dedicated to Hiram W. Evans and carrying at the back of the book the note that the information it contained was supplied by the Wizard Himself, leaving us to guess who dedicated the book. We could note that it contains a number of Christian hymns, among them "The Old Rugged Cross," "Sunshine in My Soul" and "I Love to Tell the Story." We could note also the adroitness with which the questions and answers are phrased, leading the user to the conclusion in one place that Columbus, being a Catholic and being financed by a Catholic regime, discovered only a few paltry islands, while Cabot, the doughty sailor of a Protestant king, was the first to discover the new Canaan. We would be interested to learn that all the Popes of history have, with a few exceptions, been guilty of every known crime.

Captain Fry tells of certain literature of ammunition variety which he received in the days before he apostatized. It was headed "Do You Know?" and among others it contained the following questions, all of them answered by their asking:

That a secret treaty made by the Pope started the war?
That he controls the daily and magazine press?

[16] *Ibid.,* p. 106.
[17] *Ibid.,* p. 135.

That one hundred and sixteen princes of his governments are enthroned in our cities?

That our war industries were placed exclusively in Roman Catholic hands? [18]

IV

The atrocities of the Klan do not concern us here, save in so far as they demonstrate the Klan philosophy in action. The mind can not stay for ever in the realm of fancy. It must come sooner or later to the realities which make up the life of the average—I had almost said unimaginative—American. When the Klan got going in the commonwealth, it loosed the dogs of war upon any local man or group who happened to be under the protection of the archfiends seeking to destroy America. And if these were not to be found in the form of Catholics or Jews or Negroes, then wayside neckers would suffice. The war had made cruelty and sadism righteous; it made hate a Christian virtue. It brought the welcome message to the sons of frontiersmen, accustomed now in part but not entirely to the sedentary life of the small town, that torture and even death were to be permitted if only they were inflicted on behalf of the cause of God. Men and women who parked their cars by the side of the road were committing sin; therefore, they merited the wrath of God and what could be more logical than for the instrument which the all-wise God had chosen to administer his holy wrath? *Once given the psychology of the Klan and its ritualistic expression, the atrocities are nothing but good works emanating from faith.*

The revolt of youth and the general insurrection against morality which followed the war threatened the prestige of old ideas which had themselves taken on a certain religious significance. Both religious fear and religious justification were operative in the Klan's outrages. Tell a group of Christian barbers that they are sons of God especially chosen for the task of preserving American morals and we need not marvel if they whip the village whore.

[18] *The Modern Ku Klux Klan*, p. 108.

In *The Searchlight,* official organ of the Klan in those good old days of Christian heathenism, there is printed the following extract from a sermon by a Texas preacher. It is recorded in the issue of April 8, 1922, and it reveals the sweep of the local parson's mind when trained to think in terms of the impending catastrophe:

God save the day, when, over the borders of hostile Mexico, shall pour the yellow hordes of the Orient; When Dallas and San Antonio shall become Oriental cities and heathen shrines shall take the place of our Churches. I am not an alarmist and would not paint sensational pictures. But the Jap is here. He has refused to assimilate. . . . You laboring men! If racial equality ever comes you will have to work for fifteen cents a day, eat chop suey and drink fish-fin soup.

We began by imagining evils and ended by creating them. Not finding the actual menace of Rome, we solicited the local Catholics to have their noses bloodied. But our fear was first of all that vague sense of cosmic uncertainty and jeopardy which had been in all times the basis of religious emotion and behaviour. It was something more malignant than patriotism that produced these lines written under the name of Carl F. Hutcheson in *The Searchlight:*

Patriots, *view the hellish countenance of thousands of Knights of Columbus and millions of members of the Roman Catholic Church!* The latter despise real Americanism, hate our government, hate you, Patriots! They class your mothers, sisters, and daughters as harlots, while the former is the monstrous iron wheel which the Roman Catholic Church hopes will crush America, American institutions and the purity of our women for the sake of the Dago on the Tiber—the hope of the Roman Catholic Church!

Patriots, if ever blood ran through your veins for pure American womanhood, innocent and undefiled Southern womanhood, for the purity of your home and household, let it run with a warmth that knows no quenching! Yea, let your blood spurt fire!

If there must be war with the Roman Catholics, the Knights of Columbus, and the hireling newspapers, editors and reporters, let it come! We are ready!

I have said that the War was impersonal to the majority of us Americans. It was a vague, far-off divine event, and our hates were fired like shells from a Big Bertha with the vicious prayer that they would destroy

an enemy we had never seen. We had all the pleasures of war and none of its horrors. Our whole experience was vicarious and unhealthy, what with our sacrifice in the form of meatless days and service in the form of knitting socks. It was an enterprise essentially unreal to us, yet it was necessary to the success of our participation that we feel all the emotions of the actual combatants. The state of mind this left us in is obvious from the state of mind we expressed in Ku Kluxism. We were a nation mad upon divinity and hate. We conjured enemies from behind hostile barns and laid upon them with that strange and incomparable savagery which only religious emotions can produce. We were tortured with trumped-up fears for our country's welfare and obsessed with the thought that we were the sons and daughters of God.

This, then, is the story of the Klan. It was conceived in a vision, born upon an altar, and dedicated to the deliverance of a people. It was political and racial, to be sure, but only because it was primarily religious in the amazing program it set itself. With its pomp and regalia, its solemn parades in the dead of night, its symbols and its ritual, its sadistic revelries and baitings on behalf of the Almighty, it was one thing above and beyond all: a religion of the savage mind. It made eschatology of our history, theology of our national ideals. If the student of history would know the emotional traits of primitive religion he could do no better than study the story of the Klan during the period of its greatest influence, and if he would know the shameless lengths to which hypertrophic religious behaviour can go, he need no longer go back to the Middle Ages. Let him procure the documents of the modern Klan.

XIII

THE LIBERAL CATHOLICS

I

At first blush, the Liberal Catholic Church seems an ideal sanctuary for the intelligentsia. It appears to be merely an attempt to keep intact the stately ritual and sensuous beauty of the Roman Church while at the same time junking the monstrous theology and fierce sacerdotalism of that august body. It pays no more allegiance to the Pope of Rome than does the Texas legislature. Most of its priests are laymen in everyday life—not a few of them being Freemasons—and the clergy make no claim to ride the individual conscience. Non-members are invited to full participation in its services and allowed to take its Sacraments—something which is not to be said for, say, the Campbellites of Protestant faith. Moreover, there "are no Liberal Catholic dogmas. . . . The Church encourages intellectual freedom in the interpretation of its Teachings, the Creeds, Tradition and Holy Scripture." And in spite of its arch heresies and its willingness to fraternize with pariahs, it has a perfectly sound episcopal succession, which even the Holy Father cannot invalidate, however much he might like to do just that. Really the Liberal Church has all the selling features of the Church of Rome and, so it seems, not one of the drawbacks.

It is scarcely out of its swaddling clothes, having been born in 1918, though its fetus was visible as early as 1916. It is a daughter of the Old Catholic Church of Holland, one of the several Catholic churches of the world which pay no homage to the Holy See. The Old Catholics originated in 1870 when the famous Vatican Council met at

Rome and lent its amazing definition to the doctrine of papal infallibility. A considerable number of the Continental Catholics, unable to stomach so gross a doctrine, protested and were of course excommunicated. These protestants organized themselves into congregations at Munich in 1871, but found themselves in the embarrassing position of being without a shepherd, for no bishops had joined the dissenting movement. Thus we had a body calling itself the Old Catholic Church, but with no means of handling on the Apostolic Succession, and any good Catholic knows that that would never do. "The defect fatal, of course, to any Catholic body unless somehow supplied—was in this case made good by Hermann Heydekamp, Jansenist Bishop of Deventer in Holland, who apparently with the concurrence of the Church over which he presided, consecrated on the 4th of June 1873 Dr. Reinkens, the Old Catholic nominee." [1]

And if one asks where the Jansenists got their right to stand in line with the apostles, one must go back to the Seventeenth Century for an answer. The Dutch people, with characteristic hospitality, gave sanctuary to a number of Jansenist refugees who had fled from France and Belgium to escape the Jesuit persecution there. As a result, the Dutch Church was accused of complicity in the Jansenist heresy and its Archbishop, Peter Coddle, was deposed in 1704. Since that day the Dutch Church has maintained its independence of Rome, though the members of it, too, were for a time without a shepherd. A certain Bishop Varlet had been consecrated as Bishop of Ascalon and coadjutor to the Bishop of Babylon. On the evening of his consecration he learned of the death of the Bishop of Babylon and therefore went at once to assume the directorship of that see. On his way out to Babylon, he passed through Holland, administering the sacrament to those awaiting confirmation there. This incurred the deep displeasure of the Pope, so Varlet remained in Holland the remainder of his life and consecrated four bishops in the Dutch Church. It is through this lineal

[1] Bishop F. W. Piggott, *The Liberal Catholic Church, Its Origin, History, Purpose, and Teachings* (1925), p. 6.

descent that the Old Catholic Church received the divine link with the original apostles when Reinkens was consecrated a bishop of the Old Church in 1873.

The Old Catholics united with or were absorbed by the Dutch Jansenist Church, and one of their bishops, Arnold Harris Mathew, was made bishop of Great Britain and Ireland in 1908. Bishop Mathew ordained a group of young priests in the British Isles, but they, too, found themselves ecclesiastically fatherless when Mathew deserted to Rome in 1915, and without any prospect of the old Church in Holland's appointing "another father-in-God to guide the destinies of the Old Catholic mission in Great Britain." It happened, however, that before his secession to Rome, Archbishop Mathew had consecrated as his Bishop Auxiliary, "to safeguard the succession," Frederick Samuel Willoughby, formerly a priest of the Anglican church. Bishop Willoughby was at this time also on the point of making submission to the Holy See, and again there was prospect of the lambs left without a spiritual rod and staff. But before he went over to Rome Willoughby did consecrate two Old Catholic priests, and with these as assistants, consecrated the first Presiding Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church, though it was not called that just yet. The members of the Old Church in Great Britain took Mathew's desertion for Rome as the opportunity to form themselves into an independent body and by the consecration of James Ingall Wedgewood as first Presiding Bishop, that opportunity was made good. They thus secured a valid succession and yet had the pleasures of autonomy.

The time was ripe for the renaming of the daughter church. The term Liberal Catholic was adopted after prolonged discussion in 1918—"a term which, on the whole, is about as true a description of the body for which it stands as any label could be." And thus there came into being one of the most curious bodies of modern Christendom, a church which opens apparently its sacred portals to the sinners and publicans, and more scandalous still, to free thinkers and creedal mugwumps, a Church with a perfectly valid spiritual chain joining it to the twelve

apostles, yet free from the punctilios of usage which have accumulated in the name of the Church since the time of Nicea. A most amazing coup!

It is, unfortunately, not everything it is cracked up to be. Not content with basing its appeal upon frankly sensuous elements, using lights, incense, music, and intonations to produce a feeling somewhat akin to worship, it flies into realms we know not of, and when all is said and done, it presents an eerie front, quite as dumbfounding as that of any cult under the canopy of God.

The Liberal Catholic Church was hardly weaned from the mother faith when it began to grow creepy and blood curdling. In 1916, long before its renaming, Presiding Bishop Wedgewood left England for a visit to the distinguished theosophical teacher, Charles W. Leadbeater, of Krishnamurti fame, and this enchanted dreamer was consecrated as Regionary Bishop of Australia. Here the alliance between the Liberal Catholics and the Theosophists began, and it has proceeded merrily ever since. Just as the early Church went over to Rome, the Liberal Church went over to spirit-mongering, with the result that the high-sounding principles and liturgy of the Liberal body today contain as many mysterious gewgaws as the cult of Oom the Omnipotent. The marriage of the Church and the Society was doubtless aided and abetted, if not planned, by the designing Mother Besant, whose enemies have too often been accused of inclining toward the Pope. At any rate Bishop Wedgewood and his illustrious colleague began the erection of the liturgy of the Liberal Catholic Church on the visit of the Presiding Bishop to Australia in 1916 and completed it two years later. It was modeled after that of Rome and has since been filled with the ghosts of Theosophy, so that not much as an article remains without a spooky and cryptic reference of one sort or another.

The church continued to grow and prosper in every clime. In 1917 Bishop Wedgewood made an evangelic pilgrimage to America, where he founded the body on our soil, and it "took root so firmly that by 1919 it was

thought necessary that America be constituted into a separate Province with a Regionary Bishop of its own." Accordingly, Bishop Irving Steiger Cooper, who had been ordained priest on one of Bishop Wedgewood's frequent visits to Australia, was made the Regionary Bishop for the United States of America. Less than five years after the consecration of Bishop Cooper, he had succeeded in building a procathedral at Los Angeles and has by now extended his kingdom over the greater part of the country. He lectures incessantly and democratically, going as far south as Texas and penetrating the northern woods of Washington. He is, I may add, one of the most charming speakers I have ever heard expound the doctrine.

Today the Liberal Catholic Church is well established, with regionary bishops and moderately good congregations in Australia, England, America, Java, New Zealand, South Africa, and Holland. In 1923, after the retirement of Wedgewood, Leadbeater was duly elected by his brother bishops as the second Presiding Bishop of the Church. Perilous times followed for the young church, "but such was the strength of its leaders, and especially of its great Presiding Bishop," the church weathered the gale. Attacks were launched upon its good name, and upon the good name of Bishop Leadbeater, but the crisis passed and today the body shows that hardening of the arteries which marks the final establishment of every good church.

II

Bishop Pigott defines the Liberal Catholic religion as a "blend of theosophical mysticism and Catholic sacramentalism." It seems, in the judgment of the Reverend Edmund Sheehan, "an answer to the inarticulate cry of millions groping for spiritual light: a mission sent out into the world to guide Christianity again to a knowledge of those spiritual truths which will place its teaching and worship upon the foundation rock of natural

law." [2] Those spiritual truths, I take it, are the fundamentals of the Ancient Wisdom, for the Church is tied inseparably to the apron strings of Madame Blavatsky and the doctrines she revealed. In line with this belief, the potentates of the Liberal Catholic Church hold that the Sacraments are reducible to demonstrable formulae and that one can examine their actual results. The Liberal Church claims to be in accord with modern science because it knows the science of the spirit world.

To make what I mean unmistakably clear, I can do no better than to give in brief review the high astounding arguments set forth by Leadbeater in his book, *The Science of the Sacraments.* This book is described by the headquarters of the Church as the "first comprehensive volume sent out into our modern civilization, which explains the inner workings of the spiritual forces of the ancient Catholic Ceremonies." The book is regarded by the Sandhedrin as "scientific, because it is the testimony of a great physicist of the spiritual worlds to the things which he has observed, and with which in all reverence he has experimented." The sacraments, so the belief of the Liberals runs, can be scientifically studied and their efficacy gauged in terms of spiritual atoms. Leadbeater, it cannot be too emphatically pointed out, claims to have observed with the naked spiritual eye all that he has recorded.

It should be remarked—indeed, it cannot be forgotten—that the whole trend and verve of the Liberal Church is to fill the old-time religion with astral meaning. It feels that Christianity, since its origins lay in Buddhism, is not wholly worthless, and should not be lost to this enlightened age. Jesus was "permitted to yield up his body for the use of a Mighty Teacher sent out by the Great White Brotherhood to found a new religion." [3] This Great One "took possession of His body when he was twenty-nine years old," and since he was, like Zoroaster and Krishnamurti, the vehicle of the World

[2] The Reverend Edmund Sheehan, *Teaching and Worship of the Liberal Catholic Church* (1925), p. 11.

[3] Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Christian Creed,* (1917), p. 4.

Teacher, it is obvious that his Sacraments, if restored to their original purity, have some meaning for our age. Mrs. Besant tells us that at the age of nineteen Jesus went to an Essene monastery near Mount Serbal, a place much visited by learned men travelling from Persia and India to Egypt. There reposed in this monastery one of those British Museum affairs containing the ancient wisdom: it was here that "a magnificent library of occult works—many of them of India and the Trans-Himalayan regions—had been established." The lad Jesus knew, therefore, the holy mysteries of the East before he returned to the village of Nazareth and announced himself the fulfillment of prophecy. Indeed he was "initiated in Egypt as a disciple of that one Sublime Lodge from which every great religion has its founder." [4] It is perfectly evident, so the Bishop and Mrs. Besant feel, that Jesus got his stuff from Buddhistic sources and formulated it into a working creed, of which the Nicean, Athanasian, and Apostles' Creeds are garbled and spurious forms. He also made provision for a system of sacraments through which he could empty his grace and energy out upon his followers, and it is these sacraments which the Bishop has sought to clarify and free of their specious elements. The holy eucharist, for example, is not merely a means of grace for the individual, but it is also a "plan for helping on the evolution of the world by the frequent outpouring of floods of spiritual force." Thus it is that mass said at Fiftieth Street and Fifth Avenue, New York, has the power of clarifying the atmosphere of a wicked city and of making uncomfortable the shades of departed murderers who may be lurking about to inspire others to foul and bloody deeds.

Spiritual force comes into the world through intermediate powers, and it is the business of these powers to economize that force and distribute it well. "It would be distinctly wasteful to put it down indiscriminately everywhere like rain," for the obvious reason that such profligacy would "require the effort of its materialization to a lower level at thousands of places at once." Christ and

[4] Annie Besant, *Esoteric Christianity*, p. 129.

his partners in the Great White Brotherhood are forever ready to put out these blessings upon mankind, but they require, with a view to efficiency, that man "establish at certain points definite magnetic centres, where the machinery of such materialization may be permanently arranged, so that, when the force is distributed from above, it can be at once distributed without the unnecessary waste in the construction of unnecessary machinery." [5]

All this, and infinitely more, the Bishop has shown to be scientifically sound. He is convinced, not as a saint but as an explorer of the unseen, that "through the ceremony of the Eucharist, each time it is celebrated, there passes forth into the world a wave of peace and strength, the effect of which can hardly be overrated." [6] And here the marvels of the mysteries begin. Not only does the eucharist transmit a shock of spiritual vitality to mankind, but it erects a, shall we say, visible bit of machinery for the work in hand. Not visible, that is, to the untrained eye, but sufficiently visible to Bishop Leadbeater so that he has supplied his book with twenty-seven plates, ranging from simple diagrams to elaborate ectoplasmic photographs, all illustrating the actual thought-form or eucharistic edifice which is erected by that sacred ceremony when conducted by the Liberal Catholic Church. In fact, the liturgy of the Liberal church has been carefully designed with a view to getting the best possible thought-form when the thing is done. It is able, I may add at the risk of anticipating the story, to erect a bulbous form of rare beauty and texture, taking the shape of an immense super-cathedral, above the church where the eucharist is given—provided of course that the whole performance goes off well. And if the congregation will but co-operate with the clergy, they can not only build this super-cathedral of thought-substance by the service, but they can advance their own evolution rapidly and distinctly ameliorate the "mental and moral atmosphere of the city in which they live." Christ and the Adepts have

[5] Charles W. Leadbeater, *The Science of the Sacraments,* p. 14.
[6] *Ibid.,* p. 15.

provided an immense reservoir of spiritual force in the skies and made every arrangement for the priests to tap it.

But back to the bubble. This edifice—a thin vaporous and variously coloured affair which first encompasses then transcends the church building—is compounded of matter belonging to the various Theosophical planes—mental, astral, and etheric. And at a later stage of the service, "the matter of still higher levels is introduced." At low celebration the material for the building of it is provided by the thought and devotion of the priest, aided by that of his congregation, if he has any, but at high celebration "the music and other accessories play a prominent part in its erection." The words and thoughts and feelings of the priest are still a controlling force, however, "and in all cases there is a certain amount of angelic guidance and assistance."

The truth of the business is that so many factors enter into its manufacture "that there is room for wide difference in size, style, decoration and colouring, but the general plan is always recognizably the same. It suggests the shape of a basilica." [7] It is said that the well known Church of Santa Sofia at Constantinople "was erected in imitation of one of these spiritual edifices." If one can imagine that church made of clear blue gelatin and set down firmly upon a smaller earthly church, until the earthly church merely resembles the filling of the gelatin, that will afford a fair idea of the eucharistic edifice. "The completed structure is usually approximately square in ground plan, with a number of recessed openings of doors on each of its four sides, crowned by a large central dome, with sometimes smaller domes or sometimes minarets at its corners." [8]

At the risk of making the thought a nuisance, I must repeat that this thought-form is said by the learned bishop actually to have being—atomic being. He claims to be able to see it with the trained eye of his inner being and if anyone fails to see it, that one simply hasn't been trained

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

to see the inside of things which are often "far greater and more glorious than the outer."

The Roman liturgy is capable of a comparable stunt in ether, but the finished result isn't so good. There are, according to the Liberal Catholics, many passages which debase man—such as the imprecatory prayers and the constant references to sin—which mar the beauty of the service and exercise "a distinctly prejudicial effect upon this spiritual architecture." The service used by the Church of England is "sadly maimed and truncated." This is due to the heavy-handed work of the reformers who obviously knew nothing of the intent and possibilities of the ritual with which they tampered. In consequence, though the orders of the Church of England are conceded to be valid and its priests "therefore have the right to draw upon the great reservoir of spiritual force, the edifice which she builds for its reception is singularly imperfect." This imperfect structure is not serious enough to prevent the outpouring, but "it diminishes the amount available for radiation, because much of the force has to be expended by the Angel-helpers in constructing machinery which should have been prepared for them by us." [9]

There is in the Liberal Catholic Church no such woeful wear and tear on the angels, for its ritual is carefully designed with a view to perfecting the spiritual machinery through which showers of blessings, to use the Methodist phrase, are drawn upon the waiting communicants. "The whole ritual is aimed at rightly building this form, charging it with divine force, then *dis*charging it, and each canticle or recitation contributes its share to this work." Each large division of the service makes its contribution toward the completed edifice; one part lays the foundation, another—just as though it were done by a construction company in the modern business world—comes along and does its bit, and so on until we have a creamy Santa Sofia which no one can see. As Bishop Leadbeater puts it:

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

> This gigantic thought-form is gradually built up during the earlier portion of the service. . . . The edifice swells up from below like a bubble that is being blown, Broadly speaking, it may be said that the opening Canticle provides its pavement and the Introit the material for its walk and roof, while the Kyrie supplies the subsidiary bowls or cupolas, and the Gloria the great central dome.[10]

The Bishop and his colleague started to build, they claim, a liturgy which would remove the grey of fear and the brown of selfishness from the colours in the edifice. They fairly well succeed in doing this, as well as in their other aspiration, namely, to "change the style of its architecture from classical to Gothic."

Those who think for one moment that this scientist of the other world contents himself with general assumptions and prudently avoids committing himself to details are sadly mistaken. After sketching the plan of the edifice in general, he proceeds to offer blueprints of its every niche and cranny. To begin with, the interior of the church itself must be purified at the opening of the service. Vagrants have wandered in during the week, and it is quite possible that evil thoughts have been loosed within the sacred walls. At any rate, it is well to clear the atmosphere and fill it with lovely thoughts before the service gets under steam. One instrument for this fumigation is incense, which carries a "purifying and uplifting force wherever its fragrance penetrates." The hymn, too, has its values, for it superinduces a harmonious vibration in the atmosphere. And it is rather desirable that the processional be extended into a perambulation around the church. When these preliminaries are completed, the edifice begins to rise.

The celebrant all the while aids in clearing the church of worldly thought by means of the asperges. He sprinkles the altar thrice, "as it is especially necessary that this part of the Church be carefully prepared for the reception of the tremendous spiritual force which is soon to radiate from it." The purification is produced less by the falling drops than by the will of the "priest directing

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

the energy stored in the magnetized water." He can throw this force in any direction, and immediately following his movements, the force flows in the direction indicated. When aimed at the people, this force travels "way down to the end of the church, no matter how large it may be":

> The outrush blows what looks like a vast bubble of etheric, astromental matter, a thought-edifice, ethereal, diaphanous, a bubble which just includes the congregation. Inside this the psychical atmosphere is purified, the bubble pushing back that which has not been effected. In this way an area is cleared for the operations of the Angel who will presently be invoked.[11]

The congregation sings the 121st Psalm and the bubble blown by the priest is strengthened, enlarged, and enriched. Everything is now in readiness for the Angel. There are "many orders and races of the radiant non-human spirits," says the Bishop, but they are not always as concerned with the doings of mankind as, say, the angels of the Swedenborgian heaven. Not every angel goes to church. There are certain types, however, who are inclined toward religion and quite willing to take part in religious ceremonies, not only for the pleasure of doing a good turn but because it offers the best possible opportunity for progress in cosmic evolution. So the priest never calls in vain. One of the advantages conferred by ordination is ready access to these celestial creatures. At last one is secured, and this Angel acts as architect in the structure to be undertaken. He must guard all details, and his first act is to expand the bubble. What tremendous responsibility rests upon his shoulders may be seen by the statement of Bishop Leadbeater: "If too large a pavement were built at the singing of the Canticle, the Eucharistic edifice when complete might be so attenuated as scarcely to hold together." A good angel will see that no such catastrophe occurs, but will shape the whole affair beneficently, in order not to play a joke upon the priest and the people. Havoc might be wrought in these circumstances by an angel with a sense of humour.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 38.

The angel next proceeds to lay a large mosaic floor, its extent and colouring depending entirely upon the amount of enthusiasm and concentration the people of the congregation manifest. The depth of the foundation "depends upon the material available; at a well-attended High Celebration, the pavement may be as much as a yard in thickness, its upper surface coinciding with the floor of the Church." As a general rule rich colours prevail in this mosaic foundation, but where the congregation "includes many instructed and unselfish people, radiant and delicate tints of azure and rose may be seen." [12]

By the end of the introit the bubble has become a rather substantial affair—to all appearances a large cake of ice placed firmly on a toy church. At the end of the kyrie, there are nine bulbs on top of the ice; then comes the low dome, resulting "from the swelling of the central bowl during the first paragraph of the Gloria." Traces of the four surrounding bowls are still visible. The dome is further swelled during the second paragraph of the gloria and a Gothic spire is put on top of it all by the last paragraph. The four corner bowls remain as cupolas.

And there you are!

III

That, in brief and according to the reasoned utterances of the Presiding Bishop, is what happens during the Liberal Catholic mass. And while that body has the virtue of never enforcing its dogmas, certainly the mysteries could not be greater if one had to believe in them. Its chief appeal. I believe, lies in the direction of keeping discreetly quiet about its mysteries and laying its loudest emphasis upon the freedom it proclaims. A poet or a lecher might drop into a Liberal Catholic mass and be rather well impressed by its form and stateliness. He might well hear the suave and convincing Bishop Cooper and decide at once that here was his sanctuary. But once the average American or even Englishmen, "get wise

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 50.

to" the ethereal essence of the sacraments, at least a good portion of potential converts are for ever frightened off. What the Liberal Catholic Church does in truth is substitute its own superstitions for the superstitions of the Church of Rome. Which is well and good, for it would not be a religion if it did not introduce something positive and at the same time doubtful about the vast "unseen world about us." It would be foolish and impossible to deny any cult its fantasies. Whatever its outward form, or its propaganda, a sect is known by its mysteries.

I will pass in brief review the other tenets of the faith —almost all of them the same as the doctrines of Theosophy. The cult makes much of science and freedom, yet it has its dogmas, and if it did not, it would last about as long as a third-rate literary society in Harvard. In connection with the apostolic succession, it teaches that "it is not possible for a layman to don the priestly vestments, perform the ritual and call down from heaven the spiritual power." Such a layman, if truly consecrated, could get some response from heaven, but not the full measure of blessing from the holy eucharist. "The power to do that," says Sheehan, "is conferred only at ordination, when the candidate for the priesthood is spiritually linked with Christ, and is specially prepared to call down and transmit spiritual forces." [13] The efficacy, then, of the Liberal Catholic scheme of worship, free as it may be to the general public, rests upon the assumption that Jesus conferred upon his disciples a peculiar spiritual power, which they in turn passed to the bishops of the Holy Catholic Church. "Furthermore," says Sheehan, "people who are sensitive to spiritual influences can prove the reality of the Apostolic Succession by their spiritual experiences of the sacramental administrations of the Liberal Catholic clergy."

Such a belief is not strange, save in the light of liberal claims advanced by the cult we are discussing. The more one gets into the doctrine and teaching of the body, the more obvious it becomes that the Liberal Catholic

[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 35.

Church is more catholic than liberal. The feeling prevails that Christ necessarily instituted the sacraments as a channel through which he could drench the world with goodness and love after his physical body was no longer usable: "thus the performance of a prescribed ritual; thus the spiritual link between Christ and His ministers: thus the consecrating of bread and wine: thus the vestments, the candles, the holy water and the incense, *which are* not only symbolical, but utilitarian." [14]

It is of course unnecessary to believe any of the doctrines to participate in holy communion. The authorities of the church feel that they should not keep from the fold all who have not yet seen truth with the naked eye, therefore they are tolerant of outsiders. It holds that "belief should be the result of individual study, not its antecedent." It gladly welcomes into its ranks "all who are still seeking for truth." It makes no effort to proselyte; rather it allows free communion at its altars to members of any other church, and its congregations, it is claimed, are recruited mostly of men and women who have ceased to attend church. "On the other hand, if members of other churches are attracted by the distinctive features of its work, no obstacle is placed in the way of uniting with itself. . . ." Candidates are admitted by baptism, or if that has been duly performed, by confirmation. Where both sacraments have been validly administered, the process of getting in is simple. For the baptismal rite they use water for absolution, the Trinitarian formula, together with the application of the oil of catechumens and the chrism.

It makes deliberate use of art as a spiritualizing influence, regarding beauty as of special value to the masses, for they have little of spiritual moment in their lives. Its churches are therefore attractive and worthy of study by most Protestant bodies. Its clergymen receive no stipend for their labours, nor is a fee exacted for the administering of the sacraments. The brethren are free to marry or be celibate as they please. The possibilities of healing by use of the sacred oil are only vaguely emphasized, though

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

the belief is expressed under the imprimatur of Bishop Leadbeater that "bodily ailments are in many cases the outcome of inner maladies of the soul, and in any case can be best remedied when the soul is at peace."

Nowhere is the teaching of the church more benign and positive than in regard to death. Bishop Leadbeater claims to have the lowdown on the life beyond, and he is as familiar with the topography of heavenly places as Swedenborg ever dared to be. He feels that the gloomy view of death expressed by the older churches is "out of date and out of harmony with the facts. . . . It takes no account of the result of modern discoveries: it maintains exploded theories in the face of reason and science."

> Life after death is no longer a mystery. The world beyond the grave exists under the same natural law as this which we know, and has been explored and examined with scientific accuracy.[15]

Matters affecting us so gravely as our whereabouts after death are too important to be left to guesswork. Hence careful investigations have been undertaken and accurate tabulations made.

> Death is not the end of life, as we have ignorantly assumed, but is only a step from one stage of life to another.

Death makes no change in man. He is just the same the day after death as he was the day before, with the negligible difference that he has lost his physical body. This, however, has its compensations:

> It means freedom from the possibility of pain and fatigue: freedom also from all irksome duties: entire liberty (probably for the first time in his life) to do exactly what he likes.
>
> In this spiritual world no money is necessary, food and shelter are no longer needed, for its glory and beauty are free to all its inhabitants without money and without price.

It does behoove one, however, to select his pleasures prudently in the life here below, for on these he must rely for his enjoyment in the world to come.

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[15] Quoted in Sheehan, *op. cit.*, p. 49, from *The Science of the Sacraments.*

Whatever has been his particular delight on earth—his hobby, as we should say—he has now the fullest liberty to devote himself to it entirely and to follow it out to the utmost, provided only that its enjoyment is that of the intellect or the higher emotions—that its gratification does not necessitate the possession of the physical body.

What these heavenly pastimes could be, the Bishop does not intimate. But he does go on to say that "all rational and decent men are infinitely happier after death than before it."

Certainly no cult is quite so worth hearing about for the first time. It would seem that here at last is a deliberately and objectively planned effort to "play church" on a large and adult scale. I am not so sure but that the country is ready for just that, and if so, some messiah will come out of California to start in. Despite what "Dick" Sheppard has to say about "taking Jesus seriously," observation confirms me in the belief that that is just what Americans are tired of doing. We are much too prone to take our religion, if not seriously and to heart, at least seriousmindedly. Thus we cannot have a church, a Catholic church with freemasons for priests, without yanking into the ritual a cloud of phantasmagoria and commandeering a roving angel for the conduct of the service.

All of which strikes the average urbanized yokel of emancipated ways as so much buncombe, no more to be preferred than the unsanitary and highblown absurdities of a Methodist love-feast. What our sophisticated and thoroughly disenchanted age wants is a religion which will be confessedly no religion at all. We want to play church, just as we did when we were children. In those days we did not think of God when we played, nor were we worried by the fact that the dresser was not an actual altar. It gave us no pause to use an almanac for a hymnal, or to drink milk for holy wine. There was a certain plain honesty about it all which would take well with us adult infants today. A church which made no bones about its orders, which taught no ethic save the opinion of its clergymen, which attributed no divine power to its sacraments, but sought in all details to make its service sensu-

ous and beautiful, which even denied God, if necessary, but worshipped none the less—that Church would, I believe, find a great many reverent members. But the Liberal Catholic Church does not fill the bill.

XIV

THE SWAMIS AND YOGIS

I

THE emissaries of India have had a rich and florid time with us since the day of Swami Vivekananda. He was the first and greatest zealot of the East to offer up the Hindu mysteries in palatable form for American consumption. In 1893 he came, clad in the loud regalia of his office, and settling with sublime naïveté in one of Chicago's richest hotels to await the opening of the Parliament of Religions. His followers in India had chosen him with great pride during the previous spring as their representative, and he had sailed almost immediately from Japan. From Vancouver, where he landed, he came by train to Chicago—robbed at every step of his journey, 'tis said by his biographers. He passed the time in a state of joyous excitement as he beheld for the first time the wonders of Western civilization and for a period he forgot his meditations. He landed in Chicago without friends and with no place to go. His dress made him conspicuous and gamins followed him through the station and shouted after him. On all sides was a swarm of people, chiefly visitors from every part of the democracy to the World's Fair, then open. Burdened with possessions, he looked helplessly about until some shrewd porter gathered him up and placed him in a fashionable hostelry. There he sat down in the middle of his luggage, after paying exorbitant charges to his Samaritan, and tried to recapture the Oriental art of meditation, which had been his one consolation in byways of far-off Hindustan.

The next day he set out to visit the World's Fair—he who had lived the life of an outcast monk in India. He was struck speechless by the wonders that he saw and roused to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by this miñia-

ture of the Western World. Gradually he became acquainted in Chicago, and it was not long of course until the reporters found him. There happened to be a famous rajah at the fair and there happened also to be a low-caste Indian who started a scandal of large dimensions over the rajah, saying among other things that the potentate belonged to one of the lowest orders of Indian society and that he passed in America merely because the people were gullible. The papers needed something more than a carnival freak to validate the story, so, with that ingenuity that has always marked Yankee enterprise, they credited the story of Swami Vivekananda. Whatever else the ruse may have done, it got the Swami before the public eye, and he had attained the first prerequisite of success in the land of the West.

The Swami's predicament in Chicago was soon complicated by the fact that his funds were running low. He discovered to his great dismay that the Parliament he had come to attend would not open until September. It was now July; moreover, he was told at headquarters that he would not be received when the Parliament did convene, for he was without credentials and only those delegates properly accredited in the American way would be admitted.

Broken-hearted, the monk of India set out for Boston. Just why, I do not know, save that Boston, like lower California, has always offered promise to religionists of every variety. And the step was well taken. On the train he was observed by a kindly old lady who thought it would be nice to have an Oriental in her home, bedecked as he was in the quaint and lurid garb of the East, and she immediately invited him to make his headquarters at her mansion. This the Swami was only too glad to do, and the result was that he was invited to speak before the Ladies' Club of Boston, and there achieved no mean success. Harvard professors took a lively interest in the man, and when the time came, Professor J. H. Wright dispatched him once more for Chicago, with full credentials and with the address of a friend.

Overjoyed, Swami Vivekananda started for the Parliament of Religions. He discovered, however, when he got off the train in Chicago, that he had lost the address to which he had been committed. No one could instruct him. He spoke English too imperfectly to be understood in the foreign section where he found himself and his jeopardy was heightened by the fact that the Chicagoans took him for a Negro. In desperation he finally spent the night as a true monk, sleeping in a huge box which he found near the railway yards. The next morning he arose greatly refreshed and with the simplicity born of years in the holy life of India, started begging bread from door to door along millionaires' row on Lake Shore Drive. This got him nothing, for the outraged servants merely shut the door in his face. Thoroughly disheartened, he sat down to meditate, and while he steeled himself in the posture of deep thought, the door of a mansion across the Drive opened and a kindly woman came out to greet him. She inquired if he was a delegate to the Parliament of Religions, took him into her home, and instructed the servants to supply his every need. The name of his benefactress was Mrs. George W. Hale, and from that moment he made his headquarters at her home.

Once at the Parliament, he was thoroughly at home. He was among the most colourful spectacles there and he sounded a note which America was only too glad to hear. The authorities learned soon enough to keep him as the last speaker of the hour to make the people stay until the end of the session. He could not walk across the platform without being cheered. The New York *Herald* said of him: "He was undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation." He closed his first address with these words:

May He who is the Brahma of the Hindus, the Ahura-Masda of the Zoroastrians, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Jehova of the Jews, the Father in Heaven of the Christians, give strength to you to carry out your noble ideas. The star arose in the East; it travelled steadily toward the West, sometimes dimmed and sometimes effulgent, till it made

a circuit of the world, and now again it is arising on the very horizon of the East, the borders of the Sanpo, a thousand times more effulgent than ever before.

One is likely to overestimate the influence of Swami Vivekananda after reading the three large octavo volumes of his *Life,* prepared by loving disciples in the East and the West.[1] But it cannot be denied that he brought news to the religious host of America. He was the first heathen we had ever seen face to face, and it struck us as rather marvellous that he ate and slept like the rest of us and that he had ideas. He was the first shock to our national religious egotism, and, since he was the first, we rather liked his audacity and intelligence. He came, too, at the time when the liberal movement in America lay wrapped in swaddling clothes, and he brought out of the East, this one wise man, rich gifts to bestow upon the new babe. It will not be forgotten that the New Thought had begun to spread among the middle classes by this time, or that Christian Science was represented at the Parliament, or that Unitarianism had grown somewhat respectable. Swami Vivekananda gave tremendous impetus to all of these movements and to the humanistic emphasis in theology, for the one dogma which he brought was the one we were most ready to welcome, and that was the divinity of man. He was the spirit of the new theology, for if we simmer all the modernistic and New Thought concoction down to its base, we find there nothing more than the simple idea the man is not the worm that the old theology said he was.

After the Parliament, Swami Vivekananda was lionized by Chicago society, and it was not long afterward that he began a far-flung lecture campaign. He seems to have been received indulgently in all quarters, and most enthusiastically in some. The Theosophists fought him and the orthodox Christians would have none of him. There were scandals aplenty. It is said by his followers that young girls were hired to seduce him, but he re-

[1] See *The Life of Swami Vivekananda,* by His Eastern and Western Disciples (Calcutta, 1912–15), 3 vols.

mained uncontaminated and kept inviolate his monastic vows; the girls would break down in his presence and confess that they had been paid to make advances to him. It is said also by his followers that many ladies were fascinated by the personality of the Swami and that not a few of them actually proposed marriage. But still he remained a monk. It was reported by missionaries in India, who despaired of the blow he had given the cause of evangelical Christianity in America, that Mrs. Bagley, wife of the former Governor of Michigan, had to dismiss a servant girl on account of him. This he and friends of Mrs. Bagley vigorously denied.

On the whole he turned out to be what we are in the habit of calling a good sport. He met and talked with our Robert Ingersoll and extended his activities into the West. Here he was severely tested by cowboys, who inquired if he could really concentrate so hard that nothing would bother him. He replied that he could and one day while he sat meditating they proceeded to shoot up the earth about him and send a few bullets perilously close to his head. He told them later that he had been unaware of the bullets, "having retreated into the innermost." He was rewarded by being called a "right good fellow." He held a long conversation with William James, who later wrote him addressing him "Master." In New York he established a Vedanta Society which has been well maintained and extended. On the whole, he left an impress upon the continent not to be discounted by anyone who observes our ventures into unorthodoxy.

What he did chiefly was to prepare the way for a horde of lesser figures who carried his mission far beyond the point which he must have had in mind as the ultimate. He was the apostle of Hinduism to the Gentiles, the evangel of Oriental mysteries. It was his avowed purpose to unify and synthesize the East and the West. Yet I do not believe he would tolerate the concessions which Yogananda and others make to us today. Only rarely did he play to the grandstand; only on infrequent occasions did he condescend or attempt to make the mysteries prac-

tical. He did say to a crowd of college students: "Be strong, my young men, that is my advice to you. I assure you that you will be nearer to heaven by playing football than by a study of the Gita." Again he is reported to have told his students: "You may have a Gita in your left hand, but have a football in your right." These, however, are the worst evidences of Americanism that I have found. He simply made America India-conscious and he did more than any of those who had preceded him to make Hindu philosophy popular here. That was his purpose and his triumph. And that was his mistake. If his shade is hovering about this country seeking reincarnation it must tremble with dismay and chagrin at the lengths to which his fellow Indians have gone in the attempt to make us relish Hindu philosophy.

The philosophy he propounded has set the pace for every one who has followed him to these shores. And the palaver of Oom the Omnipotent and all others who have had a following among upper classes is not unlike that which Vivekananda delivered to the ladies of New York during the winter of 1895–1896. The substance of these lectures was later dictated to Miss S. E. Waldo (a relative of Ralph Waldo Emerson), who was his chief aid in New York. She came daily from Brooklyn, it is reported, to wash the Swami's dishes and cook his food while he was established in his 39th Street house. His lectures set forth his interpretation of the *Raja Yoga* or Conquering the Internal Nature. The *Raja Yoga* embodies the results of long and patient inquiry on the parts of Eastern mystics, who have investigated, studied, and generalized the phenomena of religious behaviour. Swami Vivekananda explains that the *Raja Yoga* does not, "after the unpardonable manner of some modern scientists, deny the existence of facts which are very difficult to explain." It teaches that the goal of life is to "manifest this divinity within, by controlling nature, internal and external."[2] All Indian philosophies, he declares, have one object and "that is the liberation of the soul through perfection." The ambition set before an American by the ex-

[2] Swami Vivekananda, *The Yoga Philosophy,* Lectures on *Raja Yoga,* p. viii.

ample of a Yogi is better than any ten courses in Pelmanism. In describing the purposes of the philosophy, Vivekananda says:

> The Yogi proposes to himself no less a task than to master the whole universe, to control the whole of nature. He wants to arrive at the point where what we call "nature's laws" will have no influence over him, where he will be able to get beyond them all.[3]

Or can we imagine the palpitation which must have come to the Nineteenth Century club woman when the Swami told her that she was a potential Yogi and furthermore:

> When the Yogi becomes perfect, there will be nothing in nature not under his control. If he orders the gods to come, they will come at his bidding. All the forces of nature will obey him as slaves, and when the ignorant see these powers of the Yogi they will call them miracles.[4]

There is hardly anything in the philosophy of *Raja Yoga* that is not splashed upon a ten-league canvas. "One *peculiarity* of the Hindu mind," says the Swami, "is that it always inquires for the last possible generalization, leaving the details to be worked out afterwards." We Westerners are finicky over facts and we have allowed many abstract systems to be demoralized by the intrusion of unfavourable particulars. Not so in India. There religion remains general, and it keeps its hold on the people, for theology gets into trouble only when it gets into detail. That is the way our mind works, but the Swami teaches the reverse:

> Behind all particular ideas stands a generalized and abstract principle. Grasp it and you have grasped everything. It is a postulate of the *Raja Yoga* that the external world is not the gross form of the internal, that the finer is always the cause and the grosser the effect. . . . One who has discovered and learned how to manipulate the internal forces will get the whole of nature under his control.[5]

This marvellous control is to be attained through the rite of concentration.

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[3] *Ibid.*, p. 11.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

> Nature is ready to give up her secrets if only we know how to knock, to give her the necessary blow, and the strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point, and that is the secret.[6]

The object, of course, is to reach the point where the individual shall become a Yogi—one who is peculiarly adept in the science of the Yoga and in consequence has the machinery of all nature at his fingertips. And while Swami Vivekananda set little store by the gods of all religions and spoke with a certain lordly contempt of religious dogma, he sets before us in this object a more stirring religious motive than we have in the combined theologies of Christendom. The basic function of religion is to make man a comfortable and prosperous citizen of the universe; Christianity proposes only to offer him the inner witness of the spirit that he is accepted of God: the Raja Yoga, disclaiming and discounting the religious motive, proposes none the less to make man the king of high heaven and the engineer of the cosmos. Instead of triumph over sin the Yoga offers triumph over nature, and with all due respect to Christian theologians, nature is a more relentless enemy of man than the temptations of the flesh.

If we may judge from the testimonials, what those who follow the Swamis and Yogis want in the way of modern religion is a quick relief from neurasthenia and frustration. Only that and nothing more. But that is enough for a great part of our dumb, driven population, who reach during the course of each day a point of tension where explosion is momentarily threatened. Most of us need the calm, the bliss, the restorative solace that comes from complete introversion and retreat into something that shuts out the memory of subways and duties. The pastors can only urge us to set aside a portion of the day for prayer to God, but we have no art for prayer, and that is what the Raja Yoga teaches us. It gives prayer a new and more sophisticated name, lends it the benedictions of oriental antiquity, and brings to the person who embraces

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 5.

it a method and a science which modern America would never think to contrive. It makes ancient practice modern, and we welcome it. What we have today is nerves: what we want is rest. Hindu philosophers and fakirs working among us take full account of both and offer us what we long most to have—temporary surcease from the fascinating but at times maddening world in which we live.

Swami Vivekananda suggested a daily sanctuary for the performance of his ceremony of concentration. He invested it with blue lights and incense, suggesting that one have a room in which one neither ate nor slept. It was to be a place kept holy from the world: it was not to be entered when one was cross or angry. His instructions to his disciples were to bathe themselves and then enter it:

> Place flowers therein. Burn incense morning and evening. Have no quarrelling or anger or unholy thought in that room. By and by there will be an atmosphere of holiness there and you will feel calmer just by entering it.[7]

It is not sufficient that one merely withdraw and decide to meditate. What American would do that? The Raja Yoga offers eight decisive steps leading to full initiation, and these cannot be practised satisfactorily save under the surveillance of an inspired teacher. Roughly they are: Yama, in which the pupil masters himself, becomes trustful and self-reliant and surrenders himself unreservedly to God; then comes Asana, a series of exercises and postures designed to put the body completely at the mercy of the mind; Pratyahara, a method of making the mind relentlessly introspective; Dharana, a process through which concentration in its most boring aspect is achieved; Shyana, or holy meditation upon lofty ideas; and Samadhi, in which the individual rises at last to complete super-consciousness and lives in a realm where the ailments and limitations of the body exercise no influence over him.

Through Asana, as we shall presently see, the Hindu methods offer us every opportunity for the ritual of body

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

culture. They teach us the holiness of beauty, and make a religious ceremony of lifting the face. Swami Vivekananda tells us that there is not one muscle in the body over which man cannot establish perfect control. "The heart can be made to stop or go at bidding." [8]

He cites the cases of the Hatha Yogis, in which the achievement of bodily divinity is uppermost. These particular Yogis simply determine never to fall sick, and they never do. They are, says the Swami, "quite young and fresh at one hundred and fifty, without one hair turned grey." This achievement he sets before his students, and lays down for them a series of suggestions, such as drinking cold water through the nose immediately upon getting up in the morning. As a result of this "the whole day your brain will be nice and cool and you will never catch cold."

There is also in connection with Asana a process for "purifying the nerves." This is accomplished by a certain manner of breathing to be practised "before dawn, at midday, in the evening, and at midnight." The air is taken in carefully through the left nostril and blown out through the right, with the result that by diligent practise "in fifteen days or a month purity of nerves is attained."

Breathing properly is the best way to harmonize the whole system—not merely that the lungs are developed but rather that certain mystic fluids are distributed by the process. It is well for the subject to take "Oom" or any other sacred word "and let that word flow in and out with the breath, rhythmically, harmoniously, and you will find the whole body becoming rhythmical." Tired nerves will be marvellously calmed by this rite and the woman who is overtaxed by benevolent work during the morning can easily restore her energy and vitality in five minutes before she addresses the Mother's Club. Not only so: the system will have its influence on the face at the outset, for "harsh lines will disappear" and with calm thoughts in the mind a calm expression will overspread the countenance. Next, a beautiful voice will come.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

And if one stays doggedly at the ritual of breathing, the sacred fluid of Kundalini, having its residence at the seat of the spinal column, will be aroused. When that glad day comes, "the book of knowledge will be open. No more will you need to go to books for knowledge: your own mind will have become your book, containing infinite knowledge." [9]

It should be stated as clearly as possible before we descend a step deeper into the mysteries, that the purpose of the Yogi or adept—which all of us may one day become—is to control nature by means of controlling what is called Prana. Prana is one of what the Hindus regard as the two elemental substances of the universe. It is at best a composite name for a menagerie of elements that we know little or nothing about. Swami Vivekananda tells us that Prana manifests itself as motion, gravitation, magnetism in the cosmos and as nerve-currents and thought-force in the body. It is a holy name for force, for all force in the universe, "when resolved back into its original state, is Prana." It is this substance which, if one understood perfectly, "he would be able to move the sun and the stars out of their places, to control everything in the universe, from the atoms to the biggest suns, because he would control the Prana." [10]

When a man is meditating he is utilizing the Prana to the uttermost, for the highest action of Prana is thought. It happens occasionally that in the body the supply of Prana gravitates more or less to one part, and the balance is disturbed. Now when the balance is disturbed, "what we call disease is produced. To take away the superfluous Prana or to supply the Prana that is wanting, will be curing the disease."

There are conduits in the human body through which this sacred substance is conducted, and the control over these conduits must be the goal of one who would become a Yogi. There are the Ida and the Pimgala currents, flowing on either side of the spinal column, and there is the Susumna, which is a passage through the centre of the

[9] *Ibid.*, p. 60.
[10] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

spinal column. The Yogi alone among men has the Susumna open. When it opens "and when thought begins to rise through it, we get beyond the senses, our minds become supersensuous, superconscious, we get beyond even the intellect, where reasoning cannot reach." [11] The Swami believes that men who have made the great discoveries and revelations of humanity have stumbled into this superconscious state for a moment or so and then returned to earth greatly chastened and inspired. Such stumbling into it is fraught with danger, however, and may lead to grave mental disorders. What one needs is the steady and unfailing superconsciousness which takes one into clouds far beyond all physical knowledge.

I have cited enough to show the importance which Swami Vivekananda taught us to attach to man. Our American New Thought seems but a mild and sickly way of stating this high fancy of the Hindu mystics. "Man," says the Swami, "is higher than all animals, than all angels; none is greater than man." Even the devas (gods) are inferior to man, for they cannot attain freedom save through human birth. Once one has gotten the secret of the Raja Yoga and mastered the mystic substance called Prana, his possible actions are limitless. But of course the average woman or man in America remains perfectly content to use Prana in upsetting his competitor.

II

I have had the pleasure of seeing only one real, live Yogi in action. And I must solemnly declare that he was a holy mess. If the East can offer us nothing better than the work of the one who, with a combination of fanciful Oriental egotism and a knowledge of American advertising psychology, calls himself Super-Akasha Yogi Wassan, then it would be well to steel ourselves for a materialistic ruin. Every winter we can find advertisements of the appearance of Yogis in the cities of the East and during the spring and summer they work the back places. It was, as I have remarked, Wassan who inducted

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 60.

Governor Johnston of Oklahoma into the arcana while on one of his jaunts through the South.

There was a crowd of possibly three hundred present the night I heard Wassan discourse on achieving super-cosmic-consciousness through an adroit manipulation of the solar plexus. Somewhat to my surprise, the audience was rather well divided between men and women, and the group as a whole measured up fairly well with the average middle class congregation. Some of the young intellectuals present seemed anxious to be hostile, but on the whole the audience was indulgent and eager. Some of the more obese ladies sat in yearning postures, yet the attitude of the whole group was one of American curiosity. All of us joined heartily in the sepulchral chants with which the service was opened by the Yogi, who demonstrated the supremacy of his diaphragm at the outset by holding on to "Oom" longer than the rest of the audience put together. Perhaps I am uncharitable, but I do not think he had as good control of his breath as the average small choir soprano. But let that pass. The chant began, followed by a short concert by the Yogi on what I took to be an occult flute, and with that the worship feature was over and we settled down to hear the Yogi and later to see him accomplish his superhuman feats.

He was a man of impressive stature and I had the honour of standing near him for a few moments before he went forward to the platform. His garb was luxuriant—a turban of golden cloth entwined about his pate and a flowing robe of the same material hanging regally from his ample shoulders. His bosom was encased in a sarcophagus not unlike the dress shirt a banker wears on occasions of state, and his whole chest and belly gave the impression, largely through this latterday armour, of pure power.

Though he spoke it with that original twist that makes the speech of foreigners considerably more expressive than our own, his English was not among his charms. He held forth at length and not without flashes of humour, on the Yoga philosophy, a sketch of which I have set forth above. His heaviest emphasis lay upon the solar

plexus, which he seemed to regard as the central manifestation of divinity in man, and he told us that if we mastered the art of breathing it would be nothing for us to live two hundred and fifty, three hundred, or even five hundred, years. He laboured the idea that we are allotted a certain number of breaths during a lifetime and if we are careless enough to use them all up by sniffing the air or growing excited or nervous, we should die young. But if we practised the control of the sacred fluids by means of interminable and infrequent breaths, we should have longevity. Methuselah, and others in the Christian Bible, he said, were Yogis in that they knew how to string life out over a long period. He referred to his own teachers and to Yogis he had known in India and safely cited their stunts as examples to us sedentary Americans gaping incredulously before him.

Not only would man have longevity if he mastered the solar plexus. He would be free from disease and nervousness. He could eat anything—even peach seeds—and they would have no effect upon him. That, suggested the Yogi, would help in cutting down living expenses. During the course of his speech he took the chance to refer to the courses of lessons at ten dollars each which he was preparing to give and to promise the crowd a further elucidation of the arcana once they had signed up for the course. He referred also to his Chandler automobile.

As a good fellow, Yogi Wassan struck me as thoroughly up to par. As a Yogi, he was a sideshow freak. Yet his influence throughout America has been enormous, and his courses in New York are attended by people who speak high praise of his occult knowledge. He capped the climax of the evening by the stunt that he had advertised in the papers. He had promised us to hold fifty men at once on his diaphragm. That feat was a rather pitiable spectacle. As many men as could be induced by the cajolery of the Yogi and his fair assistants were lined up in a row and the Yogi placed himself solidly against the wall of the platform. When all was in apparent readiness, the head lady gave the signal and the line heaved forward in a football formation against the belly of the

Super-Akasha Yogi Wassan. The result need hardly be recorded. The line broke in at least four places and the Yogi held the weight of perhaps three men for as many seconds. Another attempt was made, quite good-naturedly, but with the same outcome.

My own experience is worth setting down, for it is open to dual interpretation. Highly susceptible to suggestion of any sort, I had become throughout the sermon intensely conscious of my stomach. I could not help wondering if I were giving it a fair deal and I naturally concluded as the Yogi wore on that I wasn't. I felt some pangs of malaise at the close of the performance and at about two o'clock in the morning following, I awoke with a great feeling of nausea. I had just suffered a frightful dream in which the Yogi pursued me from mountain to mountain seeking, as I remember, to cast an evil spell over my bowels. He had undoubtedly succeeded, for I was a sick man. I attempted to relieve myself by various devices and at last fell fainting into my bed again. I was ill the remainder of the night and until perhaps three o'clock the next afternoon.

I dislike spoiling a perfect case of abnormal religious experience, but in fairness I must say that, upon leaving the Yogi's sanctuary I had eaten a number of sandwiches, supplemented by dill pickles and washed down by ginger ale. Even as I write of this experience my stomach tosses about uneasily. Yet the eating cannot explain the whole of it, for my two companions who were with me at the Yogi's ate the same menu if not the same amount that I did. Still another friend shared our fare, and yet I was the only one who reported a sense of cosmic insecurity centering at the pit of the stomach.

Let the psychologists make of the experience what they will. I record it only in the interest of science and return to my original assertion that Super-Akasha Yogi Wassan was a fraud with only a thin chemise of occult knowledge to hide the nudity of him. Whatever else he was, he was not a miracle man, save to those who wanted precisely what he offered—a chance to put an arrant and recalcitrant human body under mental and spiritual con-

trol. And regardless of whether or not he has achieved super-cosmic-consciousness, he certainly knows how to achieve in the unstable members of his audience super-cosmic-diaphragm consciousness.

III

It remained, however, for the ineffable Swami Yogananda to sell Hindu philosophy to Americans by American methods and upon the basis of Yankee desire and ambition. The names I have already cited need not frighten the reader. They are commonly assumed by man and woman to give a touch of authority to their esoteric teachings. Swami simply means teacher,[12] and if we shake down the Hindu names, we commonly find that the men who took on these names were once called Smith, Heath, Falkner. The name of Oom Omnipotent was Peter A. Bernard, and he was a professional baseball player before he was an adept. In the early days when Swami Vivekananda was here, Madame Marie Louise, a noted New York atheist and freethinker, embraced the Hindu doctrine and called herself after that Swami Abhayandanda. Leo Landsberg, who, before he took his vows of poverty and chastity of the order to which Vivekananda belonged, was a New York newspaper man; later he became Swami Kripananda. And William Walker Atkinson, who has turned out some of the most insufferable blah on the subject of the Hatha Yoga philosophy, has signed the same with the name of Yogi Ramacharaka.

Swami Yogananda made his appearance in America first in 1920, when he came to Boston to attend the International Congress of Religions. The first Yogoda Sat-Sanga Centre in America was of course organized in Boston. Now Yogananda's headquarters is in lower California, where stands the Mount Washington Centre of Yogoda and Sat-Sanga. Yogoda means in plain Ameri-

[12] A more elaborate explanation is offered by the Swamis, who interpret the term to mean "Master" and assert that it can be bestowed only on a qualified disciple by one who is himself a Swami, tracing his title through a line of successive Swamis back to the 7th Century, A.D., when the ancient order of Swamis in India was reorganized.

can a system which "teaches one to harmonize all the faculties and forces that operate for the perfection of mind, body, and soul." Sat-Sanga simply means "fellowship with Truth." He now claims twenty thousand devoted students of the system, with centres in eight leading American cities, and an active bi-monthly magazine.

Not least among the celebrities who have seen in Yogoda an earnest of the millennium is to be numbered the late Luther Burbank. It is the plan of the Swami Yogananda to establish "How To Live Schools" throughout the world, and these agencies, in the opinion of Mr. Burbank, "will come as near bringing in the millennium as anything with which I am acquainted." Other indorsements, however, are infinitely more personal. Luigi von Kunits, conductor of the New Symphony Orchestra of Toronto, speaks of Yogoda's effect upon him in such terms that one is led to wonder why he still wastes the fragrance of his talent on Canadian air or blushes unseen in the obscure city of Toronto: "Youthful energy that spurns fatigue, an almost complete immunity from sickness and disease, intellectual alertness, steady firmness and decision in willing and acting, truly remarkable quickening of the receptive and retentive powers of memory, and a constantly progressing calmness and mental tranquillity" are among the benefits which von Kunits assigns to the use of the Swami Yogananda's system of harmonizing the faculties of body, mind, and soul. To Vladimir Rosing, director of the Rochester American Opera Company, Yogoda has "opened the great temple of knowledge and truth": and this after years of searching and when he was beginning to despair of ever finding "the real truth of life." He testifies: "It has taught me the spiritual contact of Cosmic Vibration, and it has given me new hope, new strength, new inspiration in my artistic work." Mme. Galli-Curci says: "Yogoda gives Health, Strength, Power to Accomplish, Peace and Poise." To this galaxy should be added the name of Louis Van Norman, formerly editor of *Nation's Business*.

What then is Yogoda? The number of leading Americans who have endorsed Yogoda would lead one to think

it a favourite brand of cigarettes. It is enlightening to note, too, the manner in which it is offered to the American public. It is advertised as a system of bodily perfection for "the busy but aspiring Western peoples." It has the peculiar versatility of being able to reduce the obese or fatten the skinny, and its mystical power is such that it will even work while one is asleep. It is what might be called the religion of the body, the creed of self-beautification, for it proposes to remove the lines of weariness from the face and vitalize the whole being with radiant energy and health. It employs no devices or mechanical instruments but "uses the WILL TO RECHARGE THE BODY-BATTERY FROM THE COSMIC LIFE-CURRENT and thus produces a FATIGUELESS STATE." It can be practised "ANYWHERE, ANY TIME, sitting, standing, or lying down, by everyone, whether old or young, sick or well, weak or strong. IT PUTS ON OR REMOVES FAT, just as desired. . . . It teaches the SPIRITUALIZATION OF THE BODY." And now let the sound and convincing American advertisement continue this chronicle of feats.

It also includes the Highest Technique of Meditation and Concentration by the psychophysiological methods taught by the great Saints and Sages of India. How to see the Vital Force and hear the Cosmic Vibration. How to attain perfect Fulfillment of all Desires thru CONTACTING COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS. The Spiritual Laws of Yogoda must be known and followed before God-contact is possible. YOGODA QUICKENS MAN'S EVOLUTION THROUGH AN INTELLIGENT CO-OPERATION WITH COSMIC LAW. It restores his Eternal Heritage and gives him Realization of himself as the IMMORTAL LIFE ENERGY.

For terms and further information, please send 15 cents in stamps or coin for Yogoda pamphlet. . . .

The following practical and obvious benefits may be listed as following hard upon a course in Yogoda. The figure will be immeasurably improved, the grace of expression will be increased by several leagues, one's Centre of Consciousness and Power of Mental Receptivity will never forget that they have had the course, and one will be brought into contact with an Infinite Reservoir of Power. "It teaches you to control your material and spirit-

ual destiny." It prevents "hardening of the arteries and insures lasting youth. . . ." It drives away headaches instantly. Harmonizes all muscle actions. Makes colds impossible. Prevents constipation and all stomach troubles.

To promulgate the doctrine the Swami Yogananda is now on the move to "recruit a Spiritual Army." This Army will spread the tidings of Cosmic Life-Force to every town and hamlet in this materialistic republic. He announces that "Yogoda needs real workers, robust in body and mind, of calm disposition, mental shock-absorbers who will allow nothing to upset or anger them, who will join Yogoda for life, or who can receive at least one year's training to be teachers, according to the rules of the institution." After the manner of the orthodox Sunday Schools, Yogoda is out to train teachers, to indoctrinate them properly, and when all is ready, we are to be treated to such an attack of cosmic-consciousness as we shall not in safety be able to withstand. For the distinguishing thing about the Swami is that he knows us as well as he knows his Oriental philosophy. During one of his recent jaunts through the countryside, he spoke to the Optimist Club of Minneapolis—after having been welcomed to the state by the Governor and the Lieutenant-Governor, and to the city by the Mayor—on the subject "How Oriental Methods Can Help Occidental Business." To the two hundred Kiwanians at luncheon assembled in the same thriving city he discoursed on the still more irresistible subject, "Recharging Your Business Battery Out of the Cosmos." We modern Americans will have none of religion if it does not offer us something practical for the wear and tear of the life we live. Swami Yogananda knows that; even the ancient mysteries of the East are of no interest to us if they do not help us in our business. Swami Yogananda knows that. Jesus unfortunately did not foresee it. It is a melancholy and irreverent thought that if He returned today He might address us in our own terminology.

The Lions, Optimists, and Kiwanians were not alone in their enjoyment of the Swami when he descended upon Minneapolis. The report offered by his own *East-West*

Magazine has it that each night for several weeks several thousand persons heard him gladly. There is accompanying this report a picture in which a large and eager audience is shown, each member with his hands raised before him in a gesture of supplication and each pair of lips rounded for enunciating the sacred word "Oom."

Probably a great deal too much store has been set by the fact that of late the Swami Yogananda was peremptorily ordered to leave the town of Miami. The Swami refused to obey the order and left later of his own accord, as he explains. What the nature of the charges against him were is not quite clear, either from the press accounts or from the circular letter he has broadcast about the incident. It seems to have derived from racial teachings which were not palatable to the chief of police; and credence is attached to this supposition by the fact that the same chief who ordered him to leave was three weeks later indicted for complicity in a chain of murders—among them the murder of a Negro bellhop who, in the line of duty, was alleged to have made the suggestion to a daughter of the old South that she enter a gentleman's room. Ere these lines find their way to type I have no doubt that the Swami will be properly vindicated, for none other than John F. Hylan, "for eight years Mayor of New York," as his own phrase has it, has been engaged to defend him.

The public was of course eager for a scandal, but the worst scandal rising from the Swami Yogananda is one he has perpetrated upon himself. He is guilty of concession to American methods and practices in the teaching of the Oriental mysteries. I do not speak disrespectfully of him; I mean only to suggest that he is a grotesquery who deserves the admiration of the business man and the contempt of the liberal, because he has put Hinduism over in the land of Gary and Ford. He has spoken before practically every vintage of business men's club in the country and a vast majority of his Centres have, like that at Washington, been organized under the "auspices of distinguished business men."

Activities carried on by the Swami from his Mount in

California are varied. There is a Candy Department which sells Cactus Candy to the faithful, devoting the proceeds to the extension of the work. There were beautiful hand-painted Christmas cards which were decked with Yogoda symbols and eloquent with Yogoda sentiments and mottoes: the proceeds from the sale of these was turned to the paving of the boulevard above which the castle of the Swami lifts its towers, its forty rooms, and its halls capable of seating one thousand admirers. Like Epworth Leaguers, the following of the Swami Yogananda may show their colours. Yogoda emblems, goldplated, in orange and blue enamel, may be had for one dollar. The appeal is made: "Yogoda Students everywhere! Proclaim to the world your adherence to Yogoda principles by wearing one of these beautiful little pins or lapel buttons." Photographs of the Swami may be had for two dollars each and the Correspondence School does a thriving business among thwarted club women and frustrated business men. Announcement is made through the columns of the *East-West* that the headquarters will gladly welcome odd and interesting gifts for the museum in Los Angeles, "also household or other gifts." The columns of the magazine are filled with stuff clipped from *Liberty* and everywhere else, including what G. Bernard Shaw, Henry Ford, Roger W. Babson, and Bruce Barton have to say about occult religion. One issue I have had the pleasure of seeing contained an article by Lillian Gish which was originally printed in *Liberty,* and an effusive article by Galli-Curci which apparently she had written deliberately for the *East-West.*

Every morning at seven o'clock the Swami sends a Divine Healing Prayer Vibration to his students and "all who ask his help in healing and liberating themselves from physical or mental disease or the spiritual suffering of ignorance." Anyone who wishes to profit by this Vibration is cordially invited to write headquarters and file notice of his or her ailment and state the nature thereof. The therapeutic miracles of the order compare favourably enough per head with those of the School

of Unity and the work of Angelus Temple. They are of a slightly different nature, however, for the followers and potential followers of the Swami seem most anxious to be delivered from fatigue and worry. Each issue of the official organ, in true Occidental fashion, carries a series of the testimonies offered by grateful beneficiaries. "I have been greatly strengthened, vitalized and have gained poise," writes one earnest woman who teaches in the public schools of Buffalo. And she adds: "From now on fatigue will be merely a word in the dictionary for me." Another writes with naïve reference to Yogoda: "I have had four years of every treatment known to medical science and all isms besides. I have received my first help through Yogoda." Still another restored a misplaced kneecap through Yogoda after she had tried every other means for sixteen years. An Ohio lady testifies that: "Yogoda is the greatest educative force in the world today. I used to feel tired all the time, now I am never fatigued. The lesson on recharging the body is worth the price of the entire course." A physician of Cincinnati glows with admiration because the science of Yogoda enables the body to perform miracles of endurance: "To know how to tap the source of energy and knowingly do that which can be done momentarily under excitement, is the key to the problems of life and health, physical, mental, moral and spiritual." A baroness, now resident in Minneapolis, writes: "My body has been energized, my mind made peaceful. My outlook on life is clearer and I have acquired an understanding of spiritual truths and how to make them practical in my everyday life." Again: "I have recovered almost entirely from nervousness: my eyesight is better and I am now able to have the use of my right ear for the first time in three years." Minneapolis enthusiasts are authors of the next two testimonials: "I can say that Yogoda is all one needs in Truth. The Swami's lesson on spiritualizing sex force should be taught in every school in our country." "Every meeting has been a spiritual feast, my soul has been filled and thrilled as never before. The ease and simplicity of the exercises, compared with the more strenuous methods

which I have heretofore been using, were a revelation to me and the results obtained therefrom, in the short time practised, is (*sic*) beyond what could be hoped for." These testimonials offering evidence of the soothing and pacifying nature of the Yogoda could be multiplied here, and they certainly will be multiplied in the magazine as Yogoda continues its triumphant march through America. The cure of nerves and frustration is not the only feat—there are others, relating to every physical ill and nasty habit. One man from Minneapolis writes: "At the healing meeting, to my great joy and surprise, I was cured of my tobacco habit completely and without any effort on my part. I have always been a heavy user of tobacco and cigars." [13]

It is the high purpose of the Swami to make religion scientific. He recognizes, with perfect soundness, that the ultimate action of all our life is the attainment of Bliss. "Religion," to him, "necessarily consists in the permanent removal of pain and the realization of Bliss of God." [14] Pain derives from fleshly desire of one sort or another and "desire is the root of all misery, which arises out of the identification of our 'self' with mind and body." [15] What man wants is Blissful Conscious Existence, and to achieve this he must abolish the sense of want and transcend the passions of the body. When we have attained what he calls Bliss, we have this transcendence and we become "the dispassionate seer of all our actions." Our narrow egoism vanishes, the All-Ego dawns, and Bliss spreads through our being. We feel that we are playing our parts on the stage of the world, without being *inwardly* affected by the weal or woe, love and hate, that playing the part involves.[16] It is this thoroughly and sublimely impersonal attitude toward the body and the self which we must achieve. To do this there are various methods. There is Concentration and there is Meditation, but far and away the best method is that taught in

[13] Testimonials taken from the *East-West Magazine*, published by the Swami Yogananda, Vol. II, No. 6; Vol. III, Nos. 1 and 2.
[14] Swami Yogananda, *The Science of Religion*, p. 6.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 31.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 54.

the Science of Yogoda as set forth by the Swami Yogananda. Here Bliss is "felt in an intense degree" and moreover: *"The practise of it is of itself intensely Blissful —far more purely Blissful,* I venture to say, *then the greatest enjoyment that any of our five senses or the mind can ever afford us."* [17] The process, roughly speaking, lies in magnetizing the spinal column and using the electricity that is stored in the body and lodged in the brain as the chief power house. When first undertaken it "brings a most attractive state of Body consciousness," but ultimately Bliss settles over the physique and the pleasures of the flesh are forgotten. In its highest reaches it brings us into direct contact with God and charges our weary frames with the elixir of eternal energy.

That, in brief, is what the Swami teaches with such gusto and success. Nature makes marvellous adjustments. In the early days when we suffered from repression and loneliness, she sent Mother Ann to us and uncapped great revivals in the mountains of Kentucky. Men and women rolled in the agony of repentance and wallowed in the pleasure of the flesh before the very throne of God. We needed release and we found it in our religion. Progress brought change and decay to our nation. Wealth accumulated and men extroverted: we grew nervous and fussy and thwarted. Then Nature sent us the Swamis and the Yogis, and we find now the solace and narcosis that we need above all else. And we find what we need, as we found it before, in the channels of religion. Certainly it all lends credence to the contention of some psychologists that we make religion the channel of our deepest wishes and that we form and shape it to our liking.

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 73.

XV

SHAKERISM

I

THERE is only one way to tell the story of Shakerism, and that is to begin with moral vicissitudes of Ann Lee. Ann, like P. P. Quimby, was the child of an honest, hard-working blacksmith. She was born in Manchester, England, forced to work in the cotton factories of that city at a very early age, and handicapped throughout her life by the fact that she never learned to read or write. She was a sensitive child, so the Shakers say, and was given frequently, like Swedenborg, to seeing angelic visions while she was yet a child. These she reported to her mother and Mrs. Lee, like another mother, kept all these things in her heart and pondered over them. Ann was markedly serious and thoughtful, with grave, penetrating eyes, and very soon after adolescence began she became depressed by the depravity of human nature and the lustfulness of marriage. She begged her mother piteously to be delivered from matrimony and its impurity, but in vain. When the proper time arrived, she was married to Abraham Stanley, a blacksmith and a man who "loved his beef and beer and his seat in the village tavern."

But the question of purity was not settled for Ann Lee. Qualms of conscience continued to torture her and she longed and prayed for sexual purity. Ann was also "burdened for her husband, from whose physical embraces she shrank with sensitive repugnance." She spent many sleepless nights of prayer to God for deliverance from her sin in matrimony. She reports that her travail and sufferings were so great that "my flesh consumed upon my bones, bloody sweat pressed through the pores of my

skin, and I became as helpless as an infant." One who knew her well in those days testified that "she wasted away like one in consumption and became so weak and emaciated that her friends had to feed and care for her as though she were an infant. At times her skin was covered with bloody perspiration and her groans and cries dismayed all." [1]

This intense suffering and repugnance for the sexual embrace continued for nine years with very little relief. She could neither read nor write, and there was little chance for the great theologians of her day to help her. She was sure of only two things, Anne Lee and sin. In 1758 she joned the society of the Shaking Quakers, a sect carried on in England under the supervision of Jane and James Wardley, which in turn owed its origin to the Camisards or French Prophets. These Camisards sprang into being at the time Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes and deprived Protestants of what little religious freedom they had enjoyed. The sect was led by James Cavalier, an inspired baker who gathered to his standard more than five hundred outraged Protestants and led them through the land proclaiming that the day of the Lord was nigh. In worship these Camisards gave way to paroxysms which resembled fits. They beat the air with their arms, fell upon the ground, and writhed in horrible contortions. When consciousness returned, for they went into the blindest of trances, they were seized with violent tremblings and twitchings, and then began to prophesy and to call upon God for mercy. They claimed the gift of tongues and of clairvoyance.

The result of these manifestations was that the government persecuted the sect mercilessly. Many were put to death in 1702 and in 1705 their three most prominent prophets were burned at the stake and two others were broken on the wheel. John Cavelier and a small group escaped to England, where they went about the country proclaiming with the same certainty of Judge Rutherford today that the end of the world was soon to come.

[1] Anna Taylor and Leila S. White, *Shakerism, Its Meaning and Message* (Columbus, 1905), p. 17.

By 1705, there were almost four hundred of these French Prophets stirring England.

It was from these Camisards that the Shaking Quakers of Jane and James Wardley took their cue. They were given to practically the same kind of convulsion when the spirit was upon them; they would be seized with a mighty trembling when the spirit descended and they would express the wrath of God against all sin. They had, however, two very important characteristics. One was the belief that the Christ spirit would come again and that the second time it would be embodied in a woman. The other was their habit of requiring all who wished to join them to confess their sins freely and minutely before they were admitted. In this regard they were the Buchmanites of their day.

Ann joined them in 1758, made a lurid confession of her sins, and got some temporary relief, but not enough. Her four children died in infancy, and this she took as a divine visitation for having succumbed to the world and the bonds of matrimony. Her suffering continued, albeit she prophesied and took an active part in the work of the Shaking Quakers—active enough at any rate to get herself thrown into jail along with the rest. It was here that the revelation came to her. It was revealed to her that man's sin lay in the premature and self-indulgent use of the sexual union. She saw in a vision, so White and Taylor inform us, that

> the first pair (Adam and Eve) performed . . . not for the divinely erected purpose of procreation, but as an act of self-indulgence and therefore sin.

This vision set her to thinking and she finished the Revelation in jail in 1770. When released from her stone cell, which was too small for reclining, she told the society of Shaking Quakers what she had seen. The announcement was attended by such displays of the divine presence and approval

> . . . that they say, at once that the candle of the Lord was in her hand and that she was able by the light thereof to search every heart

and try every soul amongst them. From that time she was received and acknowledged as the first visible leader of the Church of God on earth.[2]

This candle she used to great effect. All who knew her commented upon her eyes; she had that Buchman power of looking into the very depths of a man's soul and guessing just what his besetting sin was most likely to be. Probably nine times out of ten she, too, was right.

It was not so much the power of her eyes that counted now, however. She was the fulfillment of the Wardley prophecy. Here was Christ again, and in a woman. By the theology of the sect, Christ became the second Adam and Ann the second Eve, thus restoring the race, both male and female, to perfect purity. She was the one in whom dwelt the Divine Mother. The Shakers believe, as did the Rappites before them, that God is not triune, but dual, that he is male and female, and that since Adam was created in His image, Adam was both male and female. It was therefore necessary that there be two saviours, one to restore man, another to redeem woman from her sin. In Ann the redemption of mankind was complete.

It is not surprising that her doctrines met with some disfavour. Persecution abounded. On one occasion a mob dragged her, kicking and beating her, for two miles, but she was finally released by a nobleman, who testified that he had, for some unearthly reason, been seized by the urge to go in a certain direction. Always she seemed protected from actual death. Once a mob tried to hang her, but the excited members somehow couldn't tie the knots securely. Again they tried to stone her, but fortunately everyone missed her and she passed out of the midst of them unhurt.

Her worst foes were those of her own household. A brother become so enraged as she sat singing and prophesying that he seized a stick the size of a broom handle and beat her over the head and face until the stick was splintered. Then he called for drink and began again

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

with a new stick. Mother Ann testified that she was guarded by some unseen force and that she did not feel any of the blows that fell upon her. At last a messenger was sent to the King for a permit which would enable the village to put her out of the way, but the messenger died on the way, "in such a manner that his death was looked upon as a judgment from God."

Not only were her doctrines odious: she made people acutely conscious of their sin. The confession of sins was continued; once confessed, the memory of them was taken away. If they did not confess, Mother Ann aided them. "Many quailed before her clear unfolding of their hidden thoughts and deeds." "Others were so effected that they could not speak their own language for several days but uttered prophecies in divers tongues." White and Taylor report that Ann herself was once brought before four learned clergymen of the Church of England and that there she spoke, though illiterate, in seventy-two different languages, and in some of them more fluently and correctly than any of the clergymen had ever heard man speak before.

At last the persecution subsided, but England was too conservative and staid for the faith and Mother Ann concluded that the best chances lay in evangelizing America. With seven followers, including Abraham Stanley, her husband, four other men and two other women, she set sail in 1774 for America. On the voyage Mother Ann spoke boldly against the wickedness of the captain and the sailors. The Shakers persisted in practising their peculiar dance ceremonies on the deck of the ship, with the result that the captain threatened to throw the whole lot of them overboard. Nothing daunted, the Shakers came out again the next morning and again sang and danced on the deck. The captain started to make good his threat, when suddenly the ship sprang a leak and all hands were needed to man the ship and keep her from floundering. The sailors were at their wits' end, when Ann saw two angels on the mast of the ship; from them she received a message that everything would be all right. This message she took to the

captain. No sooner said than done. A wave hit the ship in such a manner that the loose plank was pressed securely into place and the leak no longer troubled them.

They landed without the need of further miracle and Ann, immediately after she arrived in New York, began to take in washing and ironing. It was agreed among the flock that they should, for the good of all, separate for a time. Other members of the party went up the river and took up a section of swampy land at Niskeyuna, the modern Watervliet, near Albany. Here they laid the foundation for the Shaker empire in the new land. But the tribulations of Mother Ann had not ceased. Her husband had embraced the faith with her, but New York was too much for him. He was taken ill and it required all the time and energies of his wife to bring him back to health. When he was well enough, he began to reward her with curses and abuses. He got in with the wrong crowd, as it were, and before many months passed he had renounced the Shaker faith. He returned to the cold hut where they lived and told Ann she would have to come with him as a wife of the world or else he would leave her. She refused, Abraham went out and took unto himself another wife, and Ann was left in almost complete deprivation. At times her supplies were so low that she lived on nothing but vinegar.

At least a certain livelihood seemed possible in the wilderness, and Ann joined her followers in the settlement near Albany. Extensive preparations were made for the influx of converts which she so steadfastly prophesied. One year an immense log house was built to care for the new members who were sure to come. A great harvest was reaped from the fields, and all was in readiness. Then the log house burned down and no converts came. Discouragement at last prevailed and some doubt was expressed among the brethren as to whether Ann was really the Mother of God.

It was not until after five years that the prophecy was fulfilled. Then there occurred at Mount Lebanon, New York, one of those gigantic awakenings of the spirit that mark the years of America's religious history. Among the

converts there was "violent shaking of the frame sometimes followed by outbursts of inspired song, visions and revelations." It was such an outpouring of the Holy Ghost as America had not seen. The result was that the converts, zealous and determined as they were, did not receive from their elders just that kind of instruction which they felt was needed. They wandered off into the woods, and there ran onto the strange little group of Shaking Quakers. Ann Lee's stern preaching and absolute suppression of anything that smacked of lust set well upon the stomachs of these newly earnest converts, with the result that enough joined the Shakers to make possible a Family of a hundred. They now called themselves the "United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing."

By this revival the movement took firm root. Mother Ann became the crowning spirit of it all, and she launched out at once upon far-flung missionary enterprises. The whole affair was marked by that peculiar ecstasy and suffering which attends revivals among neurotic pioneers. "From morning until far into the night they were preaching, exercising in march and dance, Shaken with the love of God, instructing young converts, agonizing in spirit, wrestling for souls that came to them." [3] From May 1781 to August 1783, Mother Ann and her elders visited thirty-six towns in Massachusetts and Connecticut, subjected always to persecution of the most childish and boisterous sort. They could hardly visit a village without being set upon by a howling pack of potential Americans, who subjected the Shakers to every brand of indignity that a sturdy forefather of Emperor Simmons could think of. At times, however, the same protecting force that had guarded Mother Ann hovered over them. Traditions of such divine partnership have multiplied. It is well known, say the Shakers, that the tree to which a certain Father Jones was tied during one of these persecutions soon afterward died.

The annihilation of sex continued the distinctive feature of the sect. To married couples who came seeking

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

admission, Mother Ann would plainly say: "You must forsake the marriage of the flesh or you cannot be married to the Lamb." If the couple wished to join they had to give up the conjugal relation and live as brother and sister, the one dwelling among the men of the Family, the other among the women.

Mother Ann died in 1784 and the rule of the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing devolved upon Joseph Meacham, a Baptist preacher who had been converted by the founders, and Lucy Wright, a woman of some talent and charm who had joined the sect with her husband. Twelve years later Meacham died and the rule for the next twenty-five years fell into the hands of a woman—Lucy Wright.

II

The spread of Shakerism to the West almost coincided with the famous Kentucky revival which took place at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. Reports came from the Kentucky region that a generous outpouring of the spirit was in progress there. Men were thrown down by the Spirit as they walked along the streets, others would simulate mad dogs, all felt painful contortions of the body. Here, it seemed, was uncrowned Shakerism. When the Brethren at Mount Lebanon heard of the manifestations, they dispatched emissaries at once, instructing them "to open the text of salvation to the people, provided they were in a situation to receive it." Three men left Mount Lebanon in January, 1800, and started out across the wilderness for Kentucky. In March they arrived at the home of Malcolm Worley, near Turtle Creek, Ohio, where they were hospitably received. They stated their position, to the great interest of Malcolm Worley, and he, anxious to test the faith carefully, called in his pastor, the Reverend Richard McNemar of the New Light Church at Turtle Creek. Conversant with Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, Reverend McNemar was no mean antagonist in debate. The colloquy lasted far into the night, with Worley, his wife, and nine children

listening intently while all sat about the huge log fire. At last conviction came upon Worley and he consented to become the centre of a Shaker community in Ohio. Within a few weeks a dozen families, including that of the Reverend McNemar, had joined the community, and by the time the missionaries were through, they had established five communities, two in Ohio, two in Kentucky, and one in Indiana. In Ohio two others were later established and the one in Indiana moved there.

These were the aggressive years of the Shakers. They reached their apex of development in 1836–1840, and though there were periods of intake ever and anon, they never achieved more than in those early days. Since then their story has been almost as tragical and dwindling as that of the American Indian. It is true that the sect fed upon the Millerite movement which stirred the country in 1843; in fact, two hundred members of this sect, weary of waiting for the end of the world, joined the Shakers of Ohio. William Miller was a Massachussetts farmer and a soldier in the war of 1812. He was a man of limited education, but by clever and ingenious prophecy based upon a literal interpretation of the Scriptures, he convinced his followers that the end would come in 1843. As is well known, the members of the sect sold their property, made every conceivable arrangement—even to the purchase of ascension robes—and went out to meet their Lord. He never came, and before long the followers grew dissatisfied and, curiously, lost confidence in their leader. They were, therefore, both psychologically and economically ready to embrace the Shaker faith. Psychologically because Mother Ann stood for a Second Appearing and economically because they had sold all they had.[4]

During the forties the Shaker communities were shaken as if by a mighty wind. Spiritualism began among them, going to such lengths and becoming so accurately recorded that the Shaker Church "may be said to be the parent of modern spiritualism." The phenomena first

[4] A great many of the "Adventist Christians" remain to this day. See "A Brief Dictionary of Sects" in the appendix.

attacked the children's orders. The youngsters talked frequently with saints and with Mother Ann, often falling into trances and waving their arms as if flying about through the air with flocks of angels. At once the attention of the elders was attracted. The experiences of the children seemed to bring no serious bodily results, and on the whole, they seemed real and quite the thing for the members of a Shaker community. The children, I might add, were acquired in two ways. They were adopted as orphans, or, as the persecutors in Ohio alleged, pressed into the order against their will, or they were born before their parents became members of the community.

It was not long before this sweeping experience spread to the adult members of the order. In 1842 there came, first, to Mount Lebanon then to all the other societies, a strange "epoch of visitations by representatives of all nationalities." Indians, Japs, Arabs, Ancient Jews, Chaldeans, Persians, and Hindus are reported by White and Taylor to have thronged to Mount Zion.

> Sometimes they came to the Elders, begging for an opportunity to confess their sins, and pleading to be admitted to the ranks of the Believers.

For months and years these visitations continued and it is said that certain spirits became well known and much loved by those whom they visited.

> The Indians came often in tribes, headed by their chief or sometimes led by a squaw. The family were called together, and then, through sensitives or media, the native Indian would be revealed in all the savage glory of warwhoop, song, and dance. . . . Sometimes they would sing a song never heard before and the whole band of affected media would sing as one person the new, strange melody, perhaps in English, perhaps in Indian, perhaps a mixture of both.[5]

The purpose in coming, however, seems to have been chiefly that of receiving instruction. According to tradition and reports, they came in work hours, went into the shops, there learned the trades of the white man, and were instructed in the various trades followed by the brethren

[5] White and Taylor, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

and sisters. Thus the principles of industrial education were applied to the Indians under the direction of Mother Ann and "ante-dated half a century modern improved methods of educating savages."

After about ten years the visitations ceased, but not without ceremony. The spirit visitors announced formally that they were about to take leave of their earthly friends. There was much sorrow over this leave-taking. Now it so happens that an exercise which these spirits began was that of kneeling and rapping on the floor when they sought to be admitted or to attract the attention of earth people. So it was that, when in 1848,

> . . . in the city of Rochester, New York, the famous rappings began at the home of the Fox sisters, the Shakers recognized the familiar sounds and knew that their visitors for ten years past had, according to their promise, gone out to visit "every city and hamlet, every palace and cottage in the land." [6]

There is a wealth of Shaker tradition and anecdote which would itself fill a large volume.[7] There is no space here for reference to these stories and traditions, though the one affecting the distinguished Lafayette is much too good to be omitted.

The stately young French officer once attended a meeting of the Shakers at Mount Lebanon. Always a shrewd observer, he became engrossed in the peculiar manifestations of a certain Abijah Worcester. The young man had the spirit upon him and as he sat under the spell of it he twitched in a manner which, even to the Shakers of his day, seemed quite remarkable. First engrossed, Lafayette became transfixed as the manifestation continued. He leaned toward the patient, studying his every move and paroxysm intently. Abijah, however, suspected that he was being used as a specimen and grew uncomfortable under the stare of the soldier. Turning to Lafayette he said, "Would you desire this gift of spirits?" Lafayette, too fascinated for a lengthy reply, said, "It is desirable." And Abijah continued to twitch. At last, however, he

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 238.

[7] For a valuable collection of this material, see *Gleanings From Old Shaker Journals,* Compiled by Clara Endicott Sears (New York, 1916).

could stand the minute inspection no longer. Getting up, he dashed from the room, but Lafayette was at his heels. Abijah ran to the barn, with Lafayette behind him. To disguise himself the subject picked up a broom and started sweeping the floor diligently. But Lafayette was with him. Unable to stand it longer, Abijah ran into the cellar, but his pursuer was relentless. At last he dashed into the loft of the meeting house, with the soldier of fortune hard behind him. There it was that Lafayette encountered Mother Ann and the elders in secret conference. From them Lafayette inquired the meaning of the strange performance which had so captured his imagination and attention. He was told that Abijah's twitching was a part of the religious ceremony of the Shakers. Upon hearing this, Lafayette is said to have asked if he might not be admitted to the community. Mother Ann told him that his functions was on the earth plane and that he was most needed at the courts of man. Lafayette went away sorrowing, and though he never became a Shaker, tradition has it that the Shakers in America got message from the spiritual world of his death fifteen days before the news arrived by boat from Europe. He appeared to one of the sensitives in a vision, reported his death, and said that he had seen Mother Ann in the glory world.[8]

It is not surprising that any group so peculiar should have been almost mercilessly persecuted, especially by Americans. Anything at variance with our own beliefs has always struck us as markedly sinful and preposterous. No man can so gravely endanger his life in the land of the free as he can by letting noise of an idiosyncrasy get abroad among his neighbours. The persecution of the Shakers is equalled, I think, by nothing else in our history unless it be the drive against the Reds and Pinks during the late war. The account of it is long and gory, and one who is avid for the gruesome details may find them in any book on the Shakers. Suffice it to say that in 1810 a mob of five hundred, led by a Presbyterian minister and accompanied by fifteen hundred spectators, attacked

[8] *Ibid.*, 239–241.

the Shakers of Union Village. It was charged that the community had stolen children, that they retained women among their members by force, and that they had carnal knowledge of their own women.[9] Nothing serious came of this mob's philandering, but the fact of it is sufficient. The leader warned them in good Presbyterian manner to give up their lewd dancing on the Sabbath. This they refused to do, saying that if they had committed any offense, they were responsible to the constituted authorities. From that time on, not to mention the indignities which the Shakers were subjected to in the East, there was a series of mobs in Ohio, all of them prompted by the spirit of meddling and all governed by the holy impulse to guide the life of one's brother man. One trembles to think what might have happened had the Shakers still been obstreperous during the last reign of terror instituted by the Ku Klux Klan.[10]

The mobs, I say, were moved by a holy animus. For what are the Shakers but sinners and heretics when regarded from the sound American point of view? They practise communism; they deny the deity of Jesus by asserting the equal deity of Mother Ann; they dress differently from their fellows and allow different customs to prevail. Thus they commit sin against the holy trinity of economic orthodoxy, theological respectability, and American manners. And their downfall, so I have heard from ministers, is to be traced to their godless practise of communism.

Their downfall was of course due to several causes. Their theology is a stench in the nostrils of the orthodox, though critics among the standard Christians have always been bewildered by the fact of their godly and uncomprising lives. At best they have been viewed with self-conscious tolerance by the other Christian sects. And they had little chance of evangelizing the world with a theology so completely at variance with the accepted one. Further, their rigid practice of asceticism has of

[9] Carroll Stewart, *The Shakers of Ohio* (Chicago, 1910), p. 17.

[10] For a remarkable novel dealing with life in a small communistic community governed by impulses and doctrines greatly resembling those of the Shakers, see Ray Strachey, *Shaken By the Wind* (New York, 1928).

course prevented their numerical increase. Nay, it has been a foremost cause of their decrease. Desertions for the world have been frequent and they multiplied as the nation made sin more and more attractive. The men and women of the community have been scrupulously separated; the keenest possible vigilance has been exercised over them; women dressed in such a manner as to conceal their charms and to hide any hint of their femininity, as is well for a mixed ascetic community. Whatever the hint of scandal, and it has even touched the name of Mother Ann, it is fairly certain that celibacy of a virginal and unflagging sort has prevailed among the Shakers. They have continued to believe with Mother Ann that the chief sin, the cause of the world's woe, the cause of woman's debasement, is sexual intercourse. This idea was expressed in verse in 1803:

> Against the flesh we all unite,
> And bear our cross by day and night,
> For virgin purity we hold
> More precious than Peruvian gold.
> And with this people none can stay,
> Unless they walk this narrow way.

I should not be surprised if the ostracism to which the Shakers have been subjected has had much to do with their failure. They must feel, as the psychologist would say, inferior. They have acquired the same pathetic paranoia which in this day and time marks the Russellites. A very old and fascinating Shaker document is not without interest in this connexion. It is entitled *The Lives and Sufferings of Our Holy Saviour and Our Blessed Mother Ann.* It came by inspiration through William Leanord in 1841. William was of the church at Harvard, Massachusetts, and he signs his message modestly with the word "Instrument." The first part is given over to an autobiographer of Jesus in the vernacular and the second to the same thing from Mother Ann. Jesus seems to have told Mother Ann that the world would regret it if they did not hear of her sufferings. She proceeds then, through "Instrument," to record those sufferings, which are

largely the sufferings of the Shakers at the time the Message was received. Ann records that in childhood she had many visions and that among them was one exceedingly gloomy prison:

> Through its gates I was never permitted to pass, nor even to glance one single look; but on the outside of these gates there was printed in large black letters:
> "Within these gates and inclosed in these walls and gloomy cells of torment dwell the persecutors, who have scourged, afflicted, and tormented and put to death God's people through all the ages of the world."

These persecutors were watched over by a group of nasty angels whose business it was to torment continuously the unhappy and wretched souls of the tormentors of God's people on earth. They were permitted to gaze on "no spirit from heaven or earth that possessed one ray of happiness, or that could extend to them one gleam of hope."

It is easy for a psychiatrist, or any collegian who reads the current stuff, to explain this vision from the spirit world recorded through "Instrument." And yet the pathology of it is not all nor is it over when it is explained. The state of mind induced by persecution is not healthy, nor does it conduce to longevity. We have come to accept without question the sophistry that movements flourish when persecuted and we fail to see that they are sometimes annihilated. Persecution can kill and I am not so sure but that the Shakers have been stifled as much by the attitude of their fellow men as by the conspiracy of the modern machine world against them.

As time went on the haunts of the Shakers became less remote from the centres of Gentile civilization and, in consequence, Shaker practices and ceremonies became more and more a spectacle to the populace. The intelligentsia of the rural sections amused themselves by gazing on the Shakers in their queer dances and odd whirling movements. These dances were symbolic, and the symbolism was never quite appreciated by the witnesses. During the sacred dance the upturned palms represented a

gesture of receiving divine blessings through the hands. The shaking of the hands turned down symbolized the shaking of sin and evil magnetism out of the body through the finger tips. The men and women ranged themselves at different ends of the room to begin the dance, then approached each other in the manner of a stunt between halves at a football game. It all must have been very amusing to Philistines.

A superb description of the gift of prophecy often induced by the sacred whirling dance is given in the admirable collection of Sears:

> At the close of the singing, one of the sisters began to rock to and fro; at first gently, then in a more violent manner, until two of the sisters, one on each side, supported her else she would have fallen to the floor. She appeared to be wholly unconscious of her surroundings, and to be moved by an invisible power. The shaking of the subject continued to increase in violence, and it was with great difficulty that she was restrained from throwing herself forcibly to the floor. Her limbs became rigid, her face took on an ashen hue, her lips moved, and she began to speak in a clear, distinct voice, every word of which penetrated every part of the room, which was as still as death. Every eye was on the recipient of the gift, every ear open to catch each word as it fell from her lips. She spoke of the shortness of life, of the absolute necessity of abandoning the world and its sinful pleasures before it was too late; that in Shakerism were embodied all the virtues and none of the vices of mankind; that through her the spirit of Mother Ann was speaking to every Shaker present to remain steadfast to the faith. . . ."[11]

III

By now the Shakers, with venerable exceptions at Harvard, Massachusetts and other New England points, have perished from the earth. The historic community in Ohio has become an orphanage and old people's home under the control of the United Brethren Church, which bought the remaining land and buildings for three hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars in 1912. The latter part of the Nineteenth Century had been disastrous. In 1857 a tract of fifteen hundred acres of land was purchased and an effort made to found a new colony, but the project

[11] Sears, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

failed lamentably. In 1867 the number at Union Village, Ohio had dwindled to a hundred and fifty-seven. In 1875 the world had made sharp inroads even upon the customs of the godly, for a number of tottering apostates decided they wanted to wear beards, whereas the hoary custom had been to shave once a week. In the eighties the dance was given up, because the members of the community were too few and too old to perform it properly. The period from 1880 to 1891 was attended by fire, cyclone, and disaster. Investments failed—such investments as that placed in an apartment hotel in Minneapolis—and the financial affairs of the body were sadly mismanaged. In 1908 only eight old Shakers were left at Union Village. Then four years later the United Brethren bought the properties of the meek for a song and transformed it all into a colony for orphans and aged widows and bachelors.[12]

Reasons for the decadence and final passing of the Shakers—apart from those I have listed—seem to me obvious. Again the case of the Indians is analagous, not only in pathos but in fact. The Shaker community was communistic, and, as the godly say, it could not thrive. But more important still, the whole communistic arrangement was founded upon an agricultural economy and a spirit of guild craftsmanship. The community, in its palmy days, was entirely self-supporting. Its members even raised the fruit from which its beverages were made. Nay, more, they even wove the cloth from which the long, light blue coats of the men and the severe garments of the women were made. What is still more important, they produced goods for sale in the outside world. The most interesting document I have seen in Shaker annals is a catalogue announcing Shaker chairs. This catalogue was sent out as a tract, greeting the people, wishing them well, calling them to repentance, and then giving the pictures of the chairs which the community at Mount Lebanon had made. And everyone admits, even those who regard Mother Ann's assumption of deity as, let us say, over-

[12] Stewart, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

stated, that the products of the community were invariably sound.

But with the impact of the machine on our agricultural land, the Shakers came into sharp competition with cheaper articles made by lathes and turned out as abundantly as Fords. Their products thus became, not chairs, but curiosities. The net result of it all was that they were crowded to the wall in precisely the same manner as were the hand workers of the guilds at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. They were not fierce enough to go about as did the hoodlums of the Ludlow riots and smash the enemies which threatened them. They clung rather to their divine way of living, hoping all the while that the good Lord would make some provision for them whereby they could conquer the world. They assigned their passing, if one may judge from the sad essays written in the last days, to the triumph of godlessness in this prosperous land of ours. The orthodox, in turn, assigned it to the triumph of godliness and the righteous defeat of communism. It seems to me that both the Shakers and their accusers are mistaken. They faded under the stern encroachment of the machine, an encroachment which neither their theology, nor the theology of their enemies, could possibly have avoided.

And thereby hangs an explanation which touches all religion today. The scheme of the great faiths is agricultural. They set themselves in the midst of Western civilization and wonder what is the matter. Only two things are possible. Either the faith passes, or it adjusts itself in some form of socialism to the conditions of the time. And, if it passes, which is the more probable, it consoles itself with the thought that its dogged righteousness has been responsible for its downfall.

It was, then, a simple, relentless change of world economy that brought the Shakers to their end. Their doctrines may be mildly amusing now, but the character and tenderness of these people is touching. Always the victims of ingrates who took advantage of their hospitality, they stand forth as the kindest and most humanitarian of the sects. Carroll Stewart tells how on cold winter

nights it was the custom at Union Village to have a fire and light and beds for tramps who might pass in the night on the Dayton-Cincinnati pike. Their history is packed with unostentatious benevolences, with incidents of unfailing hospitality, with a kindness which cannot but have leavened a part of the lump of pioneer civilization.

XVII

SWEDENBORGIANISM

I

No sect of modern times has so great an eponym as the Church of the New Jerusalem. Emanuel Swedenborg, prior to his Divine Illumination and intercourse with angels at the age of fifty-seven, was a man of talent, charm, and learning. He was a member of the Swedish House of Lords, Extraordinary Assessor of the Royal Board of Mines, a friend and confidant of the illustrious Polheim, and himself a scientist and inventor of demonstrated parts. In *Principia,* published in 1734, he propounded the nebular hypothesis—twenty years in advance of Kant's *Natural History of the Heavens* and sixty years before La Place laboured the theory in his *Système du Monde.* He tinkered with a contrivance which he described as "a certain ship which with its men was to go under the surface of the sea and do great damage to the fleet of the enemy," worked on a machine gun which would discharge seventy bullets a minute without reloading, and sketched the plan of a machine by which "men could raise themselves and move about in the air." He also invented an incipient steam engine, designed a successful ear-trumpet and contrived a new stove. In 1910 an application for patent on a stove was denied by the United States Government on the ground that Swedenborg has described the design two hundred years before. And this is the man who in his declining years founded the Church of the New Jerusalem.

He was born in 1688, the second son of Jesper Swedberg, Lutheran Bishop of Akara and previously professor in the University of Upsala. The family was

ennobled by the Queen in 1719, ten years after Emanuel completed his studies at the University of Upsala and the family name changed to Swedenborg. He was a child of pious parents, and in later years wrote to a friend:

> From my fourth to my tenth year I was constantly engaged in thought upon God, salvation and the spiritual experience of men; and several times I revealed things at which my father and mother wondered, saying that angels must be speaking through me.

And while it was well known that Martin Luther, in his monkish days, had seen spirits and heard their voices, Emanuel's mother informed his father that he "must stop these celestial excursions," and Emanuel heard not another tinkle from the glory world until he was fifty-seven.

During his college days he wrote vagrant verse in Latin and dedicated most of it to his father. His love for music was enormous, and he often took the organ in the absence of his father's organist. Helen Keller, his most enthusiastic modern disciple, tells us that "he was never known to unbend to the gayeties and sports of youth" and that "he could not even in later life make love to the shy young girl who inspired the only passion he ever knew." He went instead to her father, the distinguished Polheim, and "would have proved his love by means of charts and diagrams. The father was willing and gave the young man a warrant for the girl returnable in three years, but the girl was so frightened that her brother finally persuaded Swedenborg to give her up." [1]

He received his doctorate from Upsala at the age of twenty-one. His father wished him to enter the diplomatic service, but the young man had a hankering for science and decided to travel abroad. He had introductions to the sovereigns of Europe, which he never used, but went instead to call on Halley of comet fame. Two years he spent in England, "studying Newton daily and anxious to see and hear him"; afterwards he travelled in Germany, Holland, and France, working all the time on his pet inventions—and visiting libraries, museums,

[1] Helen Keller, *My Religion* (New York, 1927), p. 8.

picture galleries, churches, monasteries, asylums, theatres. Then upon his return to Sweden in 1716 Charles XII appointed him assayer of mines, and he spent the next thirty years of his life studying the sciences. He wrote every minute he could find, producing some sixty books and pamphlets before his soul was opened to heavenly things. Chief among his scientific volumes are *The First Principles of Natural Things, The Brain, The Economy of the Animal Kingdom,* and *Rational Psychology.* His portrait hangs beside that of Linnæus in the hall of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Stockholm.

It was while in labour with *Rational Psychology* that he drifted rapidly toward the weird experience that changed every emphasis of his amazing life. He said, "I intend to examine, physically and philosophically, the whole anatomy of the body." He then catalogued the organs and substances which he purposed to inspect minutely.

> I propose afterwards to give an Introduction to Rational Psychology, consisting of certain new doctrines [which he enumerated] through the assistance of which we may be conducted from the material organism of the body to a knowledge of the soul, which is immaterial.

In a measure he was on a quest to find the soul in the human anatomy, and he was hot on the trail of this elusive entity when his Illumination came. "It came gradually, a still small voice, at first from behind." But it came, and in 1744 "he was fully admitted to intercourse with angels and spirits by a process of speaking to them while thoroughly conscious." In his own mind there was no uncertainty. He said, "I have seen, heard, felt." He said of himself that through him

> . . . the Lord Jesus Christ, the only wise God, our Saviour, [would come] and found the New Church, which is the New Jerusalem, by means of a man who can not only receive the doctrines of this Church with his understanding but can make them public by the press. That the Lord manifested Himself before me, His Servant, and sent me on this duty, and afterwards opened the sight of my spirit, thus introducing me into the spiritual world, permitting me to see the heavens

and the hells, and also to coverse with angels and spirits, and this now continually for many years, I testify now in truth.

His contemporary, Robsahm, records a conversation in which he asked Swedenborg "where and how it was granted him to see and to hear what takes place in the world of spirits, in heaven, and in hell." The answer was that in the night one had come to him and said

. . . that He was the Lord God, the Creator of the world, and the Redeemer, and that he had chosen me to explain to men the spiritual sense of the Scripture, and that He Himself would explain to me what I should write on this subject; that same night were opened to me, so that I became thoroughly convinced of their reality, the world of spirits, heaven and hell, and I recognized there many acquaintances of every condition in life. From that day I gave up the study of all worldly science, and laboured in spiritual things, according as the Lord had commanded me to write. Afterward the Lord opened, daily very often, my eyes, so that in the middle of the day I could see into the other world, and in state of perfect wakefulness, converse with angels and spirits.[2]

In 1766 he wrote to C. F. Oetinger:

I can solemnly bear witness that the Lord Himself has appeared to me, and that he has sent me to do what I am doing now, and that for this purpose he has opened the interiors of my mind, which are those of my spirit, so that I can see those things which are in the spiritual world and hear those who are there, and which privileges I have now had for twenty-two years.

In confirmation of his heavenly fellowship, he was good enough to keep a diary of his daily contacts with the denizens of the World of Spirits. This has been translated by George Bush and others. For the edification of the reader I quote at random from the entries in Bush's translation, selecting, I confess, those which lend verisimilitude to the seer's claims.[3] As for example:

It has been observed here and there that spirits have produced on my body effects entirely perceptible to sense, just as external objects do: for instance, they have scattered disagreeable and sweet odours often enough . . . they have maltreated my body so as to cause very grievous

[2] Quoted in Helen Keller, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 19.

[3] *The Spiritual Diary of Emanuel Swedenborg; or, A Brief Of His Supernatural Experience From March to June 22, 1748.* Translated by George Bush (Boston, 1871). Entries taken at random from Part I, Vol. II.

pain, and this on several occasions; they have most manifestly induced cold and heat and cold more frequently. . . . Wherefore it should not be doubted that they are organic substances, and not merely thought.

Frequently he records, "It was this day granted me to speak with angels," and in many cases he finds the angels in happy agreement with him on ideas he had long entertained. He discovered that, as he had often thought, "the sciences contribute nothing to salvation, but rather confuse and distort ideas." Again:

I spoke with spirits concerning drunkenness, and it was confirmed by them that it was an enormous sin, as well as that man becomes a brute, no longer a man; because that man is a man lies in his intellectual faculty; thus he becomes a brute, besides which he brings damage on his body and so hastens his death, besides wasting in extravagance what might be of use to many.

As for sexual perverts, he finds among the angels a holy disgust, greater, if possible, than that which he himself often expressed. In one of his conversations he found that

Sodomites in the other life are punished with infernal torments, which are so dire that they can scarcely be described; and moreover constitute the region of the tail, where are the fæces: because they are dung and dwell in privies.

This is strong language for angels, yet often the extraordinary took place in these conversations:

Today it was granted me to experience some states which are entirely unknown to men, and, indeed, many of them ineffable, and if it should be endeavoured to form any idea thereof by words, yet they would be wholly unintelligible, therefore incredible.

So frequent and intimate was his relationship that he knows well the habits and schedules of the heavenly host:

Spirits also sleep. This night there have been many spirits around me; in the morning I spoke concerning some one, or several of them, and I have heard that they were asleep, and indeed in a sweet sleep.

It was not always that the experience was pleasant. On one occasion he records:

In sleep I was harrassed by those who employed sorceries or trulldom, but I do not remember in what manner I was harassed. Having awakened in the night, I perceived that such spirits were around me, yea also in the skin of my head; for when I awaked, many fled away, and, indeed, as if from the skin of my head, here and there with a slight hissing sound, like when some little distended visicle is perforated.

Swedenborg was obviously convinced of the special dispensation on his behalf, and he at once cast aside the paraphernalia of science as though it had been one of the demimonde tempting him to sinful pleasures. He resigned his assessorship, the better to assay the elements and ores of the World of Spirits, and from his study removed all books and scientific instruments in which he had previously delighted. On his table he placed copies of the Old and New Testament Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek and for twenty-eight years tinkered with infinity. When we remember the distinction which Swedenborg enjoyed, the booty of his forays into the scientific field, the conversion of Paul on the Damascus Road seems a mere New Year's resolution. The transformation could not be more complete if William Hale Thompson should devote his declining years to a study of English literature.

The effect of the change upon his contemporaries can well be imagined. While the science of his day was not so antipodal to theology as the science of our day, Swedenborg's change of life none the less brought no end of ridicule and criticism in the circles of scholarship. Among the saints, it was of course different. Here was a man of parts to vindicate their cause, and a moderately large number of Christians have accepted his revelations since the day of his death. Before that day he composed in Latin twenty-nine stupendous volumes, covering the whole range of Christian eschatology and doctrine, and laying so firm a basis for the faith he delivered that few if any have been able to shake it. The churches of the New Jerusalem have not been hampered greatly by heresies. It has probably been as true as any institution to its founder, and for the simple reason that he was so admired, colossal, and impressive that none has dared to

change his emphasis. Indeed the lengths to which his devotees will go may be seen from the following claim of William McGeorge, a Philadelphia lawyer, who felt that perhaps the New Church might be slipping just a bit from her moorings:

> I am quite unable to believe that it was due either to ignorance or carelessness that he capitalized so many common words. Consequently I am constrained to believe that he had an intelligent purpose in so doing, and that his so doing is an integral part of revelation.[4]

Among his followers, belief in the genuineness of his Revelation and Illumination persists and grows apace. He is regarded today as a divine seer who received special and particular information from the Lord God in the Eighteenth Century, a holy prophet who interpreted the Word with such wisdom and consummate insight that his interpretations are to be accepted in preference to the original Word itself. The Reverend John Goddard, says in familiar language, "He came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil them." The Reverend Goddard also assures us that for twenty-eight years Swedenborg "passed as freely from one world to another as we go in and out of our houses." [5] He argues for the validity of the seer's supernatural experience by reference to the instances in the New Testament where angels appeared to men, notably to the shepherds, to Joseph and Zacharias and Mary; moreover, "all the scenes in the closing book of the Bible are laid in the spiritual world." But we are "not to trust him because he *proved* his power to communicate with the dead," but rather because his unveilings were orderly and for a good purpose. This fact distinguishes them from the arrogant claims of mediums and the fakirs of modern Spiritualism.

Helen Keller compares Swedenborg to Saint John the Divine: "What he saw in symbol, Swedenborg saw in reality. He bore witness to the fulfillment of those prophetic pictures, and explained every scene, so that the

[4] William McGeorge, Jr., *How Long Halt Ye Between Two Opinions?* (Philadelphia, 191–?), p. 62.

[5] John Goddard, *Right and Wrong Unveilings of the Spiritual World* (New York, 1912), p. 62.

Apocalypse is no longer a sealed book; it lies open, its seals broken and its message shining with the splendour of the Lord's second coming." [6] The Reverend George Bush, one time professor of Hebrew at New York University, has written a book in which he sets forth the opinion he once held of the Swedish seer:

> With the mass of the Christian world, I contended myself with the vague impression of his having been a man of respectable talents and attainments, but who had unhappily fallen into a kind of monomania, which made him the victim of strange delusions and dreams—the honest but real dupe of the wildest phantasies in respect to the state of man after death, and the constituent nature of Heaven and Hell.[7]

He became attracted to Swedenborg, however, by the similarity of their beliefs in the resurrection—that it takes place immediately after death—and became an earnest votary of the seer until the day of his death. Like the majority of those who accept the claims and disclosures of Swedenborg, he exalted the man's spiritual achievements far above any paltry feats he may have performed in the realm of profane science.

It is this exaltation of the seer's religiosity which is by long odds the chief characteristic of those who follow his dictatorship in paths of righteousness. Speaking before the International Swedenborgian Congress, a body assembled in 1910 to do belated honour to the many aspects of the man's character, Dr. Edward John Broadfield, president of the assembly, stated what virtually every speaker took pains to reiterate:

> Swedenborg advanced from stage to stage, but every stage was preparatory to its successor; and those of us who consider his Illumination, as the starting point of his greatest period, recognize in all his previous experience an all-embracing period of preparation.[8]

Lest some careless reader think for a moment that the writings of Swedenborg are regarded as no more im-

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[6] Helen Keller, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[7] George Bush, *Statement of Reasons for Embracing the Doctrines and Disclosures of Emanuel Swedenborg* (New York, 1875), p. 4.

[8] *Transactions of the International Swedenborg Conference Held in Connection With the Celebration of the Swedenborg Society's Centenary,* London, July 4 to 8, 1910. (London, 1911), Edward John Broadfield, "Opening Address," p. 2.

portant among his followers than the writings of, say, Wesley among the Methodists, I must set down a clear-cut statement of the New Church doctrine as recited by Bishop Pendleton of the General Church of the New Jerusalem. This branch of the Church, as we shall presently see, is the more conservative of the two, for it branched off from what is now known as the Convention of the New Church in 1897, when certain followers became convinced that the proper acknowledgment was not being given to the writings of the seer. While it may be that the Convention has modified its views and come to regard the Swedish scientist as only a superb commentator, Bishop Pendleton leaves us in no doubt as to the meaning which he and his followers attach to the Swedenborgian revelation:

1. The Lord has made His Second Coming in the Writings of the New Church, revealing Himself therein, in His own Divine Human, as the only God of Heaven and earth. In those Writings, therefore, is contained the very essential Word, which is the Lord. From them the Lord speaks to His Church, and the Church acknowledges no other Authority, and no other law.

2. The old or former Christian Church is consummated and dead, with no hope of a resurrection; nor can there be a genuine Church except with those who separate themselves from it and come to the Lord in His New Church. The New Church is to be distinct from the Old, in faith and practice, in form and organization, in religion and social life.

3. The Priesthood is the appointed means for the establishment of the Church; it is not to be placed under external bond in the exercise of its function in the Church.

4. Baptism is the door of introduction into the New Church on earth, and establishes consociation with those in the other world who are in the faith of the Church.

5. The Holy Supper is the most holy act of the worship of the Church; and the wine of the Holy Supper is the pure, fermented juice of the grape.

6. The marriage of conjugal love is between those who are of one mind, in the true faith and the true religion. A marriage of one in the faith of the Church, with one in a false faith, or in no faith, is heinous in the sight of heaven.

7. Any interference on the part of man with the law of offspring in marriage, is an abomination.

8. The laws, in the latter part of the work on Conjugal Love, extending from n. 444 to 476 inclusive, are laws of order, given for the preservation of the conjugal.

9. The Doctrine of the New Church is revealed from God out of the inmost Heaven; the Doctrine is, therefore, in itself a celestial Doctrine, and the New Church in itself a celestial Church, but the doctrine is accommodated to every state of reception from first to last, and the Church consists of all who receive, from the wise, even to the simple. Celestial perception is the perception of the truth that is within doctrine; there is no perception outside of doctrine.

10. Unanimity is a law inscribed upon the life of Heaven, and ought to be inscribed upon the life of the Church. Important action should not be taken without essential unanimity. A doubt gives occasion for delay, that there may be further time for consideration and reflection, in order to reach a common understanding.[9]

II

Swedenborg began his labours by translating meticulously the Scriptures from Hebrew and Greek, mastering the languages before he began. He then selected those sections of the Bible which most obviously and "interiorly" were the Word of God—the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, Psalms, the Prophets from Isaiah to Malachi, the four Gospels and Revelation. To him the Word was "divine truth itself as it exists with God." But it goes without saying that this divine truth is utterly incomprehensible to any finite mind. To render it at least partially intelligible, it must assume successively lower and lower forms of expression adapted to the comprehension of various degrees of finite intelligence.

It was the business of Swedenborg, after he cast off the shackles of science, to penetrate and elucidate the internal meanings of Holy Writ. Indeed if we mix the doctrines of Theosophy and those of the New Church, there is reason to believe that Emanuel was the shade of St. John incarnate and that he was infinitely purified and improved by years of roving in the astral realm, where

[9] William F. Pendleton, *The Principles of the Academy*, An Address to the General Assembly, Berlin, Canada, June 30, 1899.

his spirit sat at the feet of mahatmas and hoary adepts. For it is the common belief of those who today accept his revelation that his labours not only transcended those of John but even superseded the work performed by the whole pack of inspired writers in the past. The most pronounced statements of the General Church of the New Jerusalem make him nothing short of another Jesus. It seems to me extremely difficult to put any other interpretation on the pronouncement of the General Church as set forth in the early part of this century. There are two principles, according to this statement, which form the basis of New Church education:

> The first of these principles was the practical acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Second Coming: that He is present with His Church in and by the Revelation of Divine Truth which has been given in and by the Theological Writings of His Servant Emanuel Swedenborg, the rational yet inspired unfolding of the Internal sense of the Word and the Heavenly Doctrine of the New Jerusalem. This acknowledgment involved the recognition of the Divine and therefore infallible authority of these Writings, as being the Voice and Word of God Himself, and not of a mere man.[10]

Indeed the statement of doctrine issued by the General Church in 1926 is even more explicit:

> This Second Coming was effected by means of a man, His Servant Emanuel Swedenborg, before whom He manifested Himself in person, and whom He filled with His Spirit, to teach the doctrines of the New Church, through the Word, from Him.[11]

Before I pass to a brief resumé of his most conspicuous pronunciamentos, I cannot forego reference to the *Diary Spiritual and Earthly of James Johnston,* a devotee of the faith during the Eighteenth Century, who evidently thought himself to be the counterpart of the sainted Emanuel. This remarkable exhibit has been edited by John Martin, who was privy to the heavenly transactions of Johnston and thought it to the best interests of the

[10] *Bryn Athyn and the Academy of the New Church* (Bryn Athyn, 1903), p. 27.

[11] *A Brief Handbook of Information Concerning the Bryn Athyn Cathedral* (Bryn Athyn, 1926), p. 37.

Church of the New Jerusalem that the work be published. Unfortunately the original manuscript was lost. The person to whom it was entrusted came to New York, where he fell to the wiles of a "cheap spiritualistic medium," and that lady deprived him of his valuable possession. But Mr. Martin, the editor, is convinced that the published diary is true to form.

It was during the year 1840 that the author, Johnston, approached Martin and gave him to understand that they had been brought together for a most important use:

> . . . that his mission was to be altogether different to that of Swedenborg, viz. —of a representative character, which would require three individuals to unite with the angels in their work.

He was accepted into the union and was "often present at the meetings in the heavens, which I suppose was necessary to my work, but my sight was only opened on three occasions."

The diary he issues, however, in rapt faith. The angels were strangers to Swedenborg while he was yet on earth if the intimate associations of James Johnston are to be believed. He records most casually the most lordly doings:

> Abraham met me according to promise, and amongst other things said he and St. John would come on Wednesday and bring with them thirty-six kings.

On Wednesday it is recorded that

> Accordingly, St. John introduced the thirty-six kings, and I gave to each an offering of half-penny. . . . So Abraham asked me the news.

Here we find reference to two of the most frequent occurrences in Johnston's spirit wanderings. He was always telling the angels the news and they were always hitting him for money. Even on the most auspicious occasions, the angels are medicants. One time there was a heavenly convocation to install Johnston as the medium between heaven and earth:

Abraham now came forward and spoke as follows: James, you are now about to witness this solemn union for which we are assembled. You are this day a witness for us on earth, chosen to record the end of the former ages and the commencement of a new and everlasting age. After the blessing, Abraham added, This is *done* and then he again said, I know that our finances are very low, but let us trust to the giver of all good. Let us freely give something to charity this day. So he asked me what I could afford to give. I told him that he knew how I stood, therefore I left it to himself what to give. So he said that he would venture two shillings and sixpense . . .

Again

I was introduced into the assembly at the time appointed. St. John's daughter was the speaker. . . .

To this entry he adds the significant postscript:

I omitted to say that Daniel took me by the hand when he came in.

Even on the occasion when Johnston received a visit from the first created man, this finited being concluded with these words:

Acts of charity are the principle of the Church. I wish to perform an act of the kind now. What can you give me?

It appears, however, that the money was always put to charitable uses and that the frequent requests of the angels was merely an evidence of their big hearts:

David and Emanuel Swedenborg and along with them twelve female angels. So E. S. said that these females wished to see me, and for that they had come. So I thanked the females for the honour they did me by their visit. So one of them said, I will say this on behalf of ourselves, that we are highly gratified to be in your company thus far, but we see that you are at present too busily engaged with your work to attend to us, therefore we wish you to meet us tomorrow morning, in the meantime we hope that we may ask one favour, and that is to lend amongst us sixpense to give to the wife of Pendlebury . . . we wish to perform some good on earth since we are here.

Still another time he records:

I received a visit from Solomon, who said thus: My earthly father, David, desired me to wait upon you, as he and Emanuel Swedenborg have gone out with the females.

How reputable this Diary is in the annals of the New Jerusalem, I cannot say. Its phenomena, however, are in accord with the experience which Emanuel himself and perfectly credible in the light of the teachings which he set forth. It is claimed that only one of his twenty-nine volumes on religious subjects deals with the spiritual world. This particular one, however, is sufficiently definite to warrant experiences of the most extravagant sort. Swedenborg established to his own satisfaction the existence of angels and spirits. Given this, it is not strange that James Johnston rubbed shoulders with them daily.

The World of Spirits must be very sharply distinguished from the spiritual world. This latter is a generic term that embraces the whole range of disembodied beings, including those who perform acts of beneficence with borrowed money and those who gibber eternally in a tortuous hell. It also includes that great host of disembodied souls who roost neither in heaven nor down below. These form the World of Spirits. Here they remain in a state of preparation for their permanent home. Into this chasm the angels sometimes fall, for Swedenborg records in his diary that they are often expelled from heaven:

> This takes place very often and daily certain spirits are expelled from heaven and brought back to the inferior spirits. Certain of them talked with me after they had been expelled.

This world of Spirits is believed by the Swedenborgians to be the place which Jesus referred to as a great gulf. It is described as a wide expanse between heaven and hell—not located of course in a grossly physical way between the two—so large that "to those in it it appears as a globe or a world, full of spirits." It corresponds, if I may be allowed to point the obvious congruity, to the purgatory of the Romish sect and the kamaloka of Annie Besant. As the Reverend Joseph J. Thornton of Glasgow points out, it may be likened to the great Judgment Hall which the dying enter. Swedenborg says of it, "It is a region into which the opposing influence of good and evil come; for it receives a copious exhalation of evils from hell and a copious and continuous inflow of good

from heaven." (*TCR,* p. 745).[12] As in the kamaloka of theosophy, the duration of the sojourn varies here with the good and bad. Reverend Thornton says:

> Those who, in this life, have been so far regenerated as to have overcome such evils and oppose the Divine order, "are taken up into heaven immediately" [AC, p. 1850]. With the inwardly wicked the case is entirely opposite. Such as have filled up the measure of their wickedness with wiles and have used goodness, as a means of deceiving, are immediately sent into hell. [AC, p. 1850] [13]

There are few of either extreme in the World of Spirits. The vast majority of departed souls reside for some time in the World of Spirits and pass through three states. Reverend Thornton, speaking before the International Swedenborgian Conference, said, that in the first state they are able to be recognized by friends and that they show some of their earthly abilities. In the second, they "act more freely from their real affections; their qualities appear without disguise; and while the inwardly wicked act more foolishly and insanely, the good act more wisely than ever before." The third state, if it is reached, is one of instruction.

In the second state, everyone makes a genuine revelation of character. This cannot be too greatly emphasized. Swedenborg tells of certain naughty spirits who thought they could deceive God.

> They denied the crimes and enormities they had perpetuated in the world. Lest they should be supposed to be innocent, all their actions were laid open and recounted in order from their own memory. They were chiefly adulteries and whoredoms. [HH, p. 462]

It is here, then, that the Divine Judgment of humanity takes place; here the souls of men are read as open books, and every man is judged according to the deeds done in the flesh—it is now too late for repentance or salvation from the Lord.

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[12] The more prominent works of the revelator are in this book referred to by initials, and for very good reason. Thus, *TCR* stands for *The True Christian Religion, Containing the Universal Theology of the New Church Foretold by the Lord in Daniell; 13, 14 and in Revelation: 1, 2.* Also, *AC* stands for *Arcana Coelestia, HH* for *Heaven and Hell.*

[13] Joseph J. Thornton, *Swedenborg's Eschatology;* An Address Before the International Swedenborg Conference. *Transactions,* p. 291.

Swedenborg taught that two Judgments had been enacted before his appearance and Revelation. The first was the Flood, the second the advent of Christ, and the third in the year 1757. This Last Judgment, like the others, took place in the World of Spirits and did not touch those who had previously ascended into Heaven or pitched headlong into Hell. It cleared the World of Spirits, "removing vast myriads, so that they no longer intercepted the flow of goodness and truth to the souls of men." It was, Thornton tells us,

> a great and general judgment upon those who had been permitted to tarry longer than others in the world of spirits; that is, upon nominal Christians, Mohammedans, Gentiles who were externally civil and moral but not interiorly lovers of the Lord and their neighbours.[14]

These had set up fictious and pseudo heavens in false security, and these the Lord quickly demolished. All of this took place in the year A. D. 1757 and of its "actual execution, character, and order, he [Swedenborg] was made the prepared witness." The World of Spirits was thus cleared of the infernal hordes that had been congregating there since the Lord's first coming and were holding in prison many of the simple good.

The Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ was coincident with this colossal purification of the world of Spirits (1757). Thornton tells us that one of the provisions made by the Lord "for the safety and final exaltation of his faithful ones is that which is parabolically described in Revelation as the thousand years, during which time the faithful are preserved from communication with, and contamination by the seductive spirits then infesting the world of Spirits." The Lord then fulfilled his promise and came again and removed the ascendancy of evil spirits.

> So Divine Truth came into the world. He prepared Swedenborg to be the human recipient, seer and scribe, by means of whose labours he could give to this world a true understanding of the Holy Word, together with many facts relating to the other life and a system of philosophy and theology such as should suffice for the rational faculties of men. . . .[15]

[14] Thornton, *op. cit.*, p. 294.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 296.

He came, not in the flesh, but as lightning, according to His prophecies.

After the souls have passed through the intermediate state, the oasis between heaven and hell, they naturally go to congregate with like-minded spirits. Thus the good ascend into heaven. The wicked are not sent to hell, but they simply go of their own sinful will and accord to the society most harmonious to their appetites. Thornton says that the Lord is really good to those in Hell, that he is ever full of great sympathy for them, but this "does not annihilate the ever-horrible conditions that are superinduced on the wicked by their own self-will." They appropriate only the bad things of the spiritual realm, "just as poisonous and noxious weeds only use the heat of the sun to ripen the most deadly juices." In Hell, says one writer, one evil spirit wants to be master over another, and finds his greatest joy in tormenting others. They are kept in prisons and workhouses and severely punished for their wickedness; for the fear of punishment is in that world "the only means by which their evils can be subdued" (*HH,* p. 509).

There is neither feasting nor psalms in the Swedenborgian City of God. Heaven is a place alive with the energetic ministrations of angels, who derive their chief pleasure from serving those on earth. There are no separately created angels. Swedenborg resents such an idea most decidedly. Heaven is the reward of righteousness, though it is not, curiously, entirely free from wickedness. The angels, he tells us, are continually "advancing in the Springtime of life," that "women who have died old and worn out with age, if they have lived in faith in the Lord, and in charity toward their neighbour, come, with the succession of years, more and more into the flower of youth and early womanhood." The angels, being led of the Lord, are organized into societies. They always seek the good of others and their occupations always "give them unfailing delights."

The angels in heaven, as I have said, are not uniformly good and wise. Their beauty is indiscribable, but it varies with the amount of Divine Truth soaked up. Their gar-

ments represent intelligence, with the most intelligence having clothes of lustrous light, the next in rank having bright and white garments, while the still lower have coloured garments. The houses and scenery vary with the various states, and there are spacious temples for the worship of the Lord. The wisest are made governors of the various societies.

Swedenborg's view of death makes the "thought of going hence positively attractive." He describes, from actual experience, the process of dying and of being raised to life in the other world. It was granted him to pass through a state "nearly" like that of dying persons. He tells us that when the respiration of the body was "almost taken away," the respiration of the spirit remained. Communication was opened with the Lord's celestial kingdom in Heaven; angels were present; his own ideas were taken away and his thoughts were received from the angels. "There was a drawing, and as it were, an attractive force, pulling and extricating the spirit from the body; light shone round about him and the angels crowded near and sought to render service and to convey instruction" (*AC,* p. 168, and *HH,* p. 449). He records in his diary spiritual intelligence received from the angels to this effect: "That man loses nothing of those things which he possessed in the body life of the body, except the body alone. Each man as he dies carries with him all the things which belong to him as a natural man—his natural memory included. "He retains everything he has read, seen, learned, thought in the world; though natural things are quiescent unless 'reproduced as the Lord pleases.' "

To the Reverend John Goddard we are indebted for the most tender thought of death of the Swedenborgian variety. He says that, "Whether one has lived well or ill, angels from the highest realms are with him during the sleep of death and during the first part of the wakening." Death does not extend "beyond the time of our Lord's sojourn in the sepulchre or beyond the third day." During the state of unconsciousness and the beginning of the awakening these ministers of the Lord surround the dying one "with what we may call an atmosphere of life

and love and peace—a sense of being carefully and tenderly cared for. No evil influences, no anxious states are permitted to approach. No thought of death is present, but only life, life more abundant, life eternal, life blessed and happy. . . . At birth into the other world, the holiest influences draw near.[16]

Then for the waking up. First comes dim consciousness, then more complete, then all the normal faculties respond, and "one finds himself in a body and world as complete in every respect as the body and world here. All is substantial and real. . . . So natural is it all that one does not realize, until he is told, that he has changed worlds. At first his companions are the highest and holiest angels, who remain until they perceive their presence is no longer congenial or useful." Finally he is surrounded by just the angels he needs and for a time 'lives a life not very dissimilar to the one he lived in the world. His memory of the world is still quite active. He thinks of his friends and his thought may bring their inward presence, but he cannot see them or hear them, or touch them, because the substances of the higher world, real as they are, do not shade off into the substance of this, but are wholly distinct in kind, the one never interfering with the other." [17]

Prophet that he was, Swedenborg had a deal to say of sex. Those of our salacious epoch who expect to find in his works nourishment for their mental passions will, however, be moderately disappointed. One of his works is entitled, *Conjugial Love and Its Chaste Delights* and offers the alluring subtitle, *Adulterous Love and Its Sinful Pleasures.* Nothing is to be found in the book but a pompous soliloquy upon the dire effects of fornication and concupiscence. He regarded conjugal love as a love of the spirit, the marriage of kindred minds welded and sealed by the benedictions of a solicitous God, and any deviation from the course it plotted was sure to end disastrously. Already we have seen what happens in hell to those who practise sodomy; any other kind of pervert is

[16] Goddard, *op. cit.*, p. 68.
[17] *Ibid.*, pp. 69; 70.

liable to the same consignment if Swedenborg's Illumination is authentic. While he himself never married, he had solid ideas of those who did and he issued encyclicals which made monogamy invulnerable both now and in eternity.

It is clear that he assigned sex an important place in the life of man and woman, but, to his mind, the whole problem could be rather well taken care of through monogamy. He followed Schmidius's translation of Jesus' statement, "He that looketh upon a woman to lust hath already committed adultery in his own heart," thus making it read, "He that looketh upon *another's woman,* etc." This impregnable view of conjugal love carries over into the glory land, for in *Heaven and Hell,* Swedenborg gives us this report:

> I once heard an angel describing love truly conjugial and its heavenly delights in this manner: That it is the Divine of the Lord in the heavens—which is the Divine good and the Divine truth—united in two beings, yet in such a manner that they are not two but as one. He said that two conjugial partners in heaven are that love, because every one is his own good and his own truth, as to mind, as well as to body; for the body is effigy of the mind, because formed in its likeness. Hence he concluded that the Divine is effigied in two, who are in love truly conjugial; and because the Divine is effigied in them, so also is heaven. [HH, p. 374.]

Despite his wholly sacramental view of marriage, there are passages in the Writings which have given pause and pain to the pillars of the New Church. In his book, *The Delights of Wisdom pertaining to Conjugial Love after Which Follow the Pleasures pertaining to Scortatory Love* he describes certain circumstances in which little slips of virtue may be allowable. He proclaims that

> . . . those who for various causes cannot enter into marriage, and on account of salacity cannot control their lusts, it is possible that this conjugial love may be preserved if the wandering love of the sex be confined to one mistress.

Also he confesses that

> . . . pellicacy is to be preferred to wandering lust, if only it be not entered into with more than one; and not with a virgin or unravished

woman; nor with a married woman; and if it be kept apart from conjugial loves.

There is no approach through pellicacy to the kinds of lust most dangerous to conjugal love: the lust of defloration, the lust of varieties, the lust of violation, and the lust of seducing innocence. Thus

. . . . with those who labour under raging heat and cannot for many reasons hasten and anticipate marriage, there seems no other refuge and as it were asylum than to take a mistress, called in French a *maitresse.*

It is possible that in this way conjugal flames may be kept glowing and, too, a boy who in puberty is unable to distinguish between fornication and debauchery may "in pellicacy which is a more regulated and saner fornication learn and see the distinctions." Of course excessive fornications lead to all sorts of trouble, such as constant want, and

. . . also foulness and immodesties, in consequence of which conjugial love in its cleanness and chastity cannot be perceived and felt, and thus neither in its sweetness nor in the delightfulness of its flower.

All "the dainties of conjugial love are taken away" and "conjugial sports turned into tragical scenes."

In commenting on Swedenborg's entertainment of sex, Mr. Charles H. Mann of Elkhart, Indiana, observes that this particular book was written about "The Pleasures of Insanity" and that its decretals do not operate in the case of the average man. He says:

But even if one man should concede (as I do not) that Swedenborg intended to teach that certain milder forms of concubinage can be tolerated as modes of practical living, the fact of his inculcating such a yielding to the demons of the flesh as justifiable in his day would not imply a corresponding compromise with immortality today.[18]

A prophet is not without honour, save in a later day when his observations seem old-fashioned even to the chaste.

[18] Charles H. Mann, *Spiritual Sex-Life* (Orange, 1902), p. 60.

III

If space allowed and the material were not so tedious, something should be said of the other doctrines. When simmered down to monosyllables, however the bulk of the remainder do not differ from standard Christian dogmas any more than the Republicans do from the Democrats. Take the doctrine of the Trinity, which is either a tenet or a puzzle in most theologies. The Swedenborgians teach that there is no trinity of persons in the Godhead, but rather a trinity of essentials: the Father is Divine Love itself; the Son is Divine Truth; and the Holy Spirit is the Divine Proceeding eternally operating in the preservation and regeneration of man. The different names signify different attributes—which is about all, as far as I can detect, that the dogma amounts to in any Christian creed, for upon no point is the average bishop more vague or ridiculous than upon the personality of the Holy Ghost.

Swedenborg claimed to restore the original teachings of Christianity and to set them upon a new, rational, and advanced basis. Indeed degeneracy had proceeded to a grave extent in the Christian Church when the seer had his visions; not only so, but doubt and scepticism were on a rampage. Descartes and Leibnitz moulded the philosophy of the day, and in contradiction to their teachings, Swedenborg entered the lists and, as I have said, spiritualized what little idealism was left. He demolished ideas of sacramentalism, unhorsed the idea of Jesus's vicarious death and atonement, and taught the Humanity of a God who had hitherto been removed from the haunts of man by craven adoration and pagan philosophism. All the decadence which the Prophet saw about him tended, in his mind, to destroy the real Christian Church and to make another revelation from God necessary to restore the kingdom.

The first movement toward the organization began in London in 1782 when a printer, Robert Hindmarsh, formed a class for the study of the writings. Gradually a society developed, and in 1788 the first public services

were held. The first society of the New Church in America was organized in Baltimore in 1792; in 1922 the Convention or regular branch reported a membership of 107 churches composed of 7066 persons. The numerical strength of the body has never been as great as it seemed, but the sapient character of its members, together with the audacity and vigour of its literature, has made it a sect of extraordinary influence.

In recent years the General Church of the New Jerusalem, which separated from the Convention in 1897, has grown enormously both in influence and prestige. This branch of the New Church has headquarters at Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, where the Academy of the New Church is located. It was, in fact, the growth of the Academy which gave rise to the independence of this division. For over one hundred years before the Academy was founded (in 1877), it had become apparent to certain rigorous members of the New Church that the body was growing lax in the importance and authority attached to the Writings; there were those who felt that, though the Writings were beautiful and edifying they were by no means divinely inspired; there were others who believed that the Writings might even become antiquated. It was against the growth of such egregious heresies that the founders of the Academy set their faces. They determined that by a process of education the offspring of New Church members would be properly indoctrinated and kept within the fold. Then upon the separation of the General Church from the Convention in 1897 the properties of the Academy were taken over and the work of the General Church has since that time centered around the educational work performed at Bryn Athyn.

During the fifty years since its founding, the Academy has grown to be a first-rate educational institution, comprising all departments from kindergarten to graduate work recognized by the highest universities. It publishes three times a year *The Journal of Education,* which compares in tone and format quite favourably with any of the pedagogical quarterlies and has nothing to distinguish it greatly from the rest unless it be a preoccupation with

the writings of Swedenborg. The Bryn Athyn Cathedral, which attracts more than a hundred thousand visitors a year, is another feature which has brought this branch to the fore. The Cathedral required six years for its construction, and its central tower rises one hundred and fifty feet from the ground.

Some touch of realism is needed to bring this sketch to a close. That touch is well provided by the behaviour of Swedenborgians during the late war. With the revelation of the interior meanings of the Word which the seer gave, and with all the claims which the New Church lays to distinction in doctrine and conduct, we should expect to find the writers of the sect presenting ideas during the war hysteria somewhat at variance with those of the bulk of Christian ministers. But in the annals of *The New Church Review,* official organ of the Convention, one finds the same fatuous Scriptural condonement of the War that is to be found in any journal of the period. Thus E. H. Schneider quotes from Swedenborg to the effect that "no idea can be had of spiritual life except what is in civil life" and proceeds with the following observations:

> The Bride, the Lamb's wife, seeks an abode and resting place on earth; she cannot live in the poisonous atmosphere of autocracy; that is a proved fact; she is very uncomfortable in the atmosphere of autocracy. She can rear her offspring of spiritual good and truth only in the sphere of mutual love and respect. After a thunderstorm the lungs breathe purer air. After fermentation the wine is clear and the dregs are at the bottom. . . . Monarchy like dregs is falling to the bottom and we may rest assured that after this war no sane person will dare to stand up before the people and defend monarchy. After this fermentation in which the thought learns to distinguish clearly the evil of monarchy, comes temptations in which the affections are purified from substances which adhere to this fallacy. This is when the New Church will reveal its real strength. On the plane of conscience or spiritual good and truth, the New Church stands pre-eminent and alone.[19]

He feels that by the war the world was being cleansed and prepared for the true Christian spirit.

Or note Albert P. Schack's amazing exegesis of the

[19] *New Church Review.* Vol. 25, p. 367.

commandment, Thou shalt not kill. Mr. Schack explains that this command was given to natural or primitive man and that it can be comfortably modified in the case of men who can distinguish between good and evil motives. He then shows that it is quite allowable for the allied soldiers to kill Germans because they are prompted by a lofty movement. Further:

> . . . it is wrong and not allowable for the Germans, or those who represent aggression and wrong, to kill a single British, French or American soldier for those purposes or to take a single human life. They, however, do it though it is not allowable but directly contrary to the law of God, and they are also violating every other command of God.

The adroitness of his Swedenborgian mind will be seen in the manner by which he wiggles out of the next difficulty. The Bible says, "Love your enemies."

> Can we kill and at the same time love them, and reject hatred of them? Yes. There is no man or no nation so wicked but that we should have some hope and desire and even be willing to pray, as indeed the Lord told us to do, that if possible they might be led to repent of their wickedness and finally be saved.[20]

He feels that possibly "among so many Germans there may be some who are fighting for love of country, and who, having been deceived by those in authority, really do believe that their cause is just, and that they have right on their side."

Perhaps it is unfair to throw the war-thinking of any group into its face now that the War is over. I have no doubt that Schack and Schneider have repented. Yet it is obvious that war, like drunkenness, reduces us to our actual selves. In war we are as we are all the time, except more so. It must be a matter of chagrin to the followers of Swedenborg that, with all "the complete Distinctiveness of the New Church" and "the utterly vastated condition of the Old Church in all things, external and internal," and with all its highblown claims to transcendent social ethics, it had nothing to offer humanity in its last great crisis but gory exegesis.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 465.

XVII

MORMONISM

I

THOSE who think that Mormonism has become defunct since the Saints began the heretical practice of monogamy, need only to have a look at the creed of Senator Smoot, or read the strident tracts of any one of the present Twelve Apostles. The menace has abated, to be sure, and public interest has declined, for, as a people, we are never actively concerned with anything that is not a menace. No books, for example, appear today under such a title as *Uncle Sam's Abscess,* and, in the main, our view has become benign and tolerant. The Mormons have become good Americans, and that suffices. During 1919 four Western Senators arose on the floor of the Senate chamber and thanked God for the sober and solid citizenry of Utah, citing in evidence the fact that the Mormons yielded readily their quota to the draft and oversubscribed every patriotic drive launched among them. What is more, two writers have recently pointed out that Mormon mothers have more babies than any other American women (1 every 4.4 years, to be exact), and this is further evidence of the sound and dependable citizens to be found among the Saints today. Though only half the population of Salt Lake City is Mormon, both the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs protested bitterly when the English novelist, Winifred Gates, tossed a brick at the Mormons a few years back. Indeed the Mormons have become so much like the Baptists that unless the Apostle Talmage, say, is discovered to have eleven wives concealed in his cellar, where they are starved, beaten, and periodically ravished, the public will soon forget

this astounding American religion which built an empire, defied the federal government for years, outraged Christendom in general, and even today numbers more than seven hundred thousand adherents.

I have said that New Thought was our distinctive contribution to the faiths of mankind. In a sense it is. It represents our rollicking optimism, our sturdy belief that we are the chosen of the Lord, not as a race, but as individuals. Yet to be exact, Mormonism is undoubtedly the most indigenous of them all. Theosophy comes from India, Bahaism from Persia, Russellism from the Hebrew Scriptures, Rosicrucianism from the land of the Hun, and so on down the line. Each of the others is in some measure exotic, a transplanted religion which finds congenial soil upon our continent. Not so with Mormonism. It was made in America, and that fact is appropriately stamped all over its bottom. Its Bible came into being at Palmyra, New York, it proclaimed Zion first in Illinois and later in Utah, its prophet's name was Smith, its sacred history deals with North and South America, with landmarks familiar to us all, and not with events in far off Judea. Its exodus took place across the plains of our continent, its Red Sea was the Mississippi, and when the last trump sounds Jesus is coming to American soil, with headquarters in Salt Lake City. It's all very real. And Senator Smoot sees all our material improvements as the harbingers of that glad day when earth's palingenesis shall be complete and the righteous shall gather in Zion. And it is just as timely as it is real. We are now living, says the Senator, in the Fullness of Times: "This age is destined to witness the consummation of God's purposes in relation to this planet."

The story told by the Book of Mormon is after this fashion:

There was a man named Lehi who lived with his wife and four sons in Jerusalem during the closing years of the Seventh Century B. C. There came to him at that perilous time the word which came to so many Jews: he was told to flee into a far country. He obeyed the divine com-

mand, and with his children and another family wandered for eight years in the Arabian desert, during which time Lehi and his faithful son, Nephi, had many marvellous revelations from God. They finally came to a halt on the shores of the Arabian sea, where they received a divine command to build a ship and launch out into the deep. By faith they accomplished this, and within a short time the party was headed for South America. They reached that land without mishap, and because of its luxuriance and fertility, they prospered and multiplied.

With properity came vicissitudes and dissensions. Nephi was not the only son of Lehi; indeed there was another very wicked son, and he was called Laman. Quarreling commenced between the Nephites, who stood for righteousness and Jehovah, and the Lamanites who stood for idolatry and licentiousness. The Nephites prospered and grew fair of skin and beautiful to look upon, while the Lamanites degenerated and God cursed them with a ruddy skin. Things went on, with the Lamanites, despite their sinfulness, becoming more powerful, for they were a fierce and warlike band. The Nephites, however, retained divine favour. At the time of His resurrection and ascension, Jesus Christ came over and ministered unto the Nephites. It was, by the way, to these Nephites He referred when He said, "Other sheep have I which are not of this fold."

But righteousness does not always triumph immemediately. As a matter of fact, the Lamanites finally destroyed the Nephites in 429 A. D., and the final battle was staged near Palmyra, New York. The Lamanites further degenerated and, of course, became the Indians which Columbus found in the islands and other explorers in their subsequent voyages. But the Nephites did not pass without record of their doings. Those records were stored safely in the golden tablets of what later became known as the Book of Mormon. There were to be found the instructions which they had received from God all along and from Jesus Christ when he came back from Jerusalem after his ascension. Thus it is that the Book

of Mormon merely supplements the Bible, and, quite naturally, has equal footing with the other words of Holy Writ in Mormon belief.

It was to Joseph Smith, Jr., the son of a well-digger, that this delightful document was first revealed. It was originally inscribed upon heavy gold tablets and it was through Joseph's diligence that the story was translated from the "reformed Egyptian" in which it was written to the high-sounding rhetoric of the book as we have it today. Problems of textual and higher criticism start up from every bush along the way, but we have neither the time nor the right to scamper after them. More has been written about the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon than about any other moot matter on the human record, unless it be the Genesis account of creation. It suffices to say that foes of the Latter-Day faith are of one accord: The Book was a fraud and utterly preposterous. The Church itself continues warmly to defend its ethereal origin and it has sent many eloquent and earnest advocates to the bar in the Book's defence. Either the book came from God or it was the labour of human hand. If it came from God, there's an end to the discussion.

I have space to cast in brief review only one theory of the sceptics. That theory rests upon the case of Solomon Spaulding, a Congregational minister and merchant who died in 1816. The story has it that Spaulding, while resident at Conneaut, Ohio, became interested in the Indian mounds of the vicinity and later wrote a story purporting to give an account of early Indian history. He called his fraud *Manuscript Found,* and asserted that he had unearthed it in one of the many mounds about Conneaut. He was in the habit of reading the manuscript to neighbours, so that it acquired extensive popularity.

In 1812 Spaulding is said to have gone to Pittsburgh for the purpose of getting his manuscript published. The theory next has it that Spaulding left the manuscript with a printer in Pittsburgh and that Sidney Rigdon, a Campbellite preacher of Mentor, Ohio, obtained a copy and with Joseph Smith at Palmyra contrived to make the whole thing into the Book of Mormon. The connexion

with Rigdon is made by the son of the printer with whom the manuscript was left in Pittsburg. The Mormon tradition has it, however, that in 1830 certain Mormon missionaries, on the way West, called upon Rigdon at Mentor, Ohio, and showed him the Book of Mormon for the first time. He finally embraced the faith, left the Campbellites, and founded a Mormon church in the community.

Really the whole discussion is bootless. It is enough for us to know that Brother Smith found the golden tablets at Palmyra. He was a young man who had previously been converted—or half-converted as the orthodox now say—in a Methodist revival. This left him in a quandary. He looked about and tried to decide which church to join, for there were scads of sects in the neighbourhood. But, as Widtstoe points out in his book, *Joseph Smith As a Scientist,* the lad, then fourteen years of age, went about to decide the matter in a scientific manner. "Consequently he went out into a quiet grove and asked God to reveal the truth to him." The result was all that any scientist could wish, for God Himself came down out of heaven to the unlettered boy and brought Jesus Christ along with Him. Joseph testifies, and the testimony is to this day an inlaid feature of the Mormon tradition: "I saw two personages whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spoke to me, calling me by name, and said (pointing to the other), 'This is my Beloved Son, hear Him.' "

Immediately the child inquired which sect was right and proper. But Jesus Christ replied that he "must join none of them," that in point of fact he, Joseph Smith, had been chosen in divine circles to establish, rather to re-establish, the real Church of Jesus Christ on earth. This was cheerful news to a lad not over fourteen years of age, and the vision made him exceedingly self-conscious and given to Swedenborgian illusions in the skies. To these he had in fact always been addicted, just as had Mother Besant and Emanuel of the Church of the New Jerusalem. But, says Nephi Lowell Morris, in his very recent book, *The Prophecies of Joseph Smith and Their*

Fulfillment, such supernatural experiences and visions and communications were only normal in a lad who was destined to be so great a prophet. Moreover, says Morris, if these dreams, visions, and communications were necessary to the prophets of old, they were necessary to Joseph Smith, and to deny them would be to undermine all prophecy since the days of Adam.

This was the "first and most glorious of his revelations," and it occurred in the year 1820. The next came along in 1823. Joseph reports that he was alone in prayer when "immediately a personage appeared at my bedside," and that personage turned out to be none other than the angel Moroni. Moroni told Joseph as they talked together that there was a book deposited, "written upon gold plates," which told the authentic story of the previous inhabitants upon this continent and further that "the fullness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it, as delivered by the Saviour to the ancient inhabitants." Moroni also spake unto him saying that there were likewise (just as God would have it) two media with the tablets, known as Urim and Thummim, which would enable Joseph to translate the tablets without difficulty. He was further instructed by Moroni that if he dared show either the plates or the ponies to any one, he would be destroyed. As the angel talked, Joseph saw with unfailing eye the place where the tablets reposed, so clearly did he see the place in fact that he recognized it the next day when he went to get them. But the time was not yet ripe. This was a place "convenient to the village of Manchester, Ontario County, New York."

In 1827, the fullness of time having come, Joseph called for the plates. Again the heavenly messenger charged him that he tell no man. And no sooner did Joseph have the plates than he realized the value of the warning. He declares that the "most strenuous exertions were used to get them from me; every stratagem that could be invented was resorted to for that purpose." But, noble Prophet that he was, Joseph Smith persevered. He kept the plates safe from mortal eye, save the eyes of three selected witnesses, until he had completed his

translation, with the kindly assistance of Urim and Thummim, and then the messenger called for them and they were returned to him for ever.

A testimony signed by three witnesses, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, appeared on the Book of Mormon when it was first published, solemnly declaring that these men had seen the sacred plates with the "eye of faith," and with the naked eye as well. Two of the witnesses, Cowdery and Whitmer, were later chased out of Missouri when eighty Mormons declared that they were thieves and counterfeiters. The third, Harris, pressed by a lawyer in Palmyra, amended his testimony: "Why, I did not see them as I do that pencil case, yet I saw them with the eye of faith. I saw them just as distinctly as I saw anything about me—though at the time they were covered over with a cloth."

Unfortunately, too, all three of the witnesses became apostates of the faith. Cowdery went so far as to join the Methodist Church and to become superintendent of the Sunday School at Tiffin, Ohio. He was later rebaptised. Whitmer deserted after the adoption of polygamy and founded a small sect known as The Church of Christ. Harris, who was roundly discredited by Smith, first joined the Shakers and then became a missionary to England for a small sect of Mormons that split off from the main trunk. The flyleaf of the Book of Mormon that bears the Testimony of the Three Witnesses carries "And Also the Testimony of the Eight Witnesses." This statement contains the affirmation that "we have seen and hefted and known of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken."

There was really no way to check the translation of the Book of Mormon, for the angel took the plates away with him after Smith had made his rendition. A later book, however, has been tested among the scholars. That was what Joseph Smith called *The Book of Abraham.* He got it from Michael H. Chandler, a travelling showman who came to Kirtland, Ohio, in 1833, with Egyptian mummies and other curiosities. He bought some rolls of papyri from Chandler and declared immediately that

he had a sacred document written by the holy hand of Abraham. This he translated at once and it became a part of the Mormon almanac of belief. Smith published a crude reproduction of the hieroglyphics and drawings of the papyri along with his translations. These were submitted in 1912 to eight outstanding scholars versed in Egyptian lore, and one and all of these savants declared that the Egyptian scenes and figures were but poor copies of the original and that they were ordinary funeral apparatus having no more to do with Abraham than with William Dean Howells. Dr. John Peters of the University of Pennsylvania declared that the text and interpretation "displays an amusing ignorance." James H. Breasted of the University of Chicago declared that the Book of Abraham "very clearly demonstrates that he [Joseph Smith] was totally unacquainted with the significance of these documents and absolutely ignorant of the simplest facts of Egyptian writing and civilization."

The word "Mormon" as given in the Century Dictionary is from a Greek word meaning "bugbear," and in zoölogy it is the name of several animals, including the baboon. But Joseph Smith didn't know this. His own explanation was that since "mo" is the Egyptian word for good, by a simple addition of "more" or "mor," the contraction, we get the word "Mormon," which literally means "more good." (*Times and Seasons.*) The truth is that the term "Mormon" has been pretty well abandoned among the Saints, and when it appears in their writings, it is always in quotation marks. They prefer rather to call themselves The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints."

The Words of Mormon, however, form a part of the book that bears the name. In 3 Nephi V, 20, we read: "I am Mormon and a pure descendant of Lehi." And the Words of Mormon begins: "And now, I, Mormon, being about to deliver up the record which I have been making, into the hands of my son, Moroni, behold I have witnessed almost all of the destruction of my people, the Nephites." The first edition of the book bore the words, following a general statement of the origin and con-

tents, "By Joseph Smith, Junior, Author and Proprietor." These words seemed a little brazen, too much like a restaurant sign, as it were, and the later editions merely credit Smith with the translation. The Book tells us that there were on this continent even before the people of Lehi got here, another race, the Jaredites, who came directly after the confusion of tongues and were wholly destroyed before Lehi and his caravan arrived. The doings of the Lehis were carefully preserved on various plates, until they fell into the hands of one of Lehi's descendants, Mormon, who had an abridgment of them made in 384 A. D., and after burying the original plates in a hill he gave the abridgment to his son, Moroni, who boxed the affair, together with a story of the people of Jared and buried them both in the hill "Cumorah" in New York, 400 A. D.

A good portion of the sacred tome is lifted bodily from the Bible. Hyde in his book, *Mormonism,* tells us that in the first 428 pages there are 298 direct quotations from the New Testament, and many chapters from both the Old and New Testaments appear bodily in the Book of Mormon. These quotations are from the Authorized Version of the English Bible, and, as Snowden cleverly points out, they appear errors and all. The phrase of Shakespeare "the undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns" was used in 2 Nephi I, 14, twenty-two hundred years before the bard was born. Reference is made to the Gospel and to Christ six hundred years before Christ ever came to earth or before the Christian Churches were established. Christ appeared, as I have said, to these people in America, preached great sermons to them from the mount and invited the whole curious multitude to come and poke their fingers in his side and feel the prints of the nails upon his hands and feet. The emigration of Jared was accomplished upon eight barges the length of a street, says the holy Book; these barges were tossed about for three hundred and forty-four days, carrying not only the passengers, but food for all, together with more flocks and herds than Noah ever thought of getting on the ark.

Upon these golden plates rest the sturdy and ample buttocks of the present Mormon Church. Here is the great American invention in the things of the spirit, a religion which gives us our own peculiar contact with God, and makes Gentiles of the Jews. For Joseph Smith restored the Church of Jesus Christ and those who do not accept the restoration but continue to hanker after heresies are in danger of landing in the lowest order of the graded Mormon hell.

II

Most folk, as I say, have come to regard the traditions as interesting and to think wistfully of the tales Mamma used to tell about the Mormons. The belief prevails that the body is defunct and that it has surrendered its theology. To set ourselves aright on this item we need only to read the writings of the modern authors of the faith. I confess that the younger members of the Church, as in all churches today, are properly shamefaced and silent upon the mysteries. They talk much of fruits and have little to say of roots. They talk of the fecundity of Mormon mothers and the success of the Liberty Loan. But in its essentials the Faith remains unchanged and the gospel is spreading at a rate which few of the regular branches of Christianity can equal. I have previously alluded to *The Prophecies of Joseph Smith and Their Fulfillment,* by Elder Morris. This is a book which was published in 1926, and at no moment of Mormon history could the devotion to the Prophet have been greater. Morris regards a Prophet as one who has been "divinely designated to speak and act for God, and is commissioned with divine authority for the purpose of guiding, directing, and instructing mankind in the things of God." It is his abiding conviction that "we are now in the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times." This is the Dispensation referred to by the Apostle Peter and subscribed to by Senator Smoot. The instrument that gave us this Dispensation which, as we have seen, will culminate in the millennial reign of Christ, was none other than

Joseph Smith. As expressed by Morris, reiterated by the Apostle Talmadge and believed by the vast majority of adult Mormons, John the Baptist, "who held the keys of the Lesser or Aaronic Priesthood in the earlier dispensation, appeared in his resurrected state and ordained Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery." Later the presiding three of the first Twelve Apostles, to wit, Peter, James, and John, ordained these men to "the holy apostleship, conferring upon them the higher or Melchizedek Priesthood. . . ." It must be emphasized that the powers thus conferred upon Joseph Smith of Palmyra, New York were the same which Jesus, Moses, and Elias conferred upon Peter, James, and John during the mystical experience on the mount of Transfiguration. These powers were transferred to Joseph Smith for the inauguration of the New Dispensation on earth and the reestablishment of the Church of Jesus Christ. Morris says that Joseph thus had "transmitted to him, for the benefit and endowment of the Church in this day and age, the powers and keys of all preceding dispensations. They were literally bestowed upon him and his associates at the hands of angels, who were either resurrected or translated beings, men who had ministered on earth in former dispensations."

Therefore, says Mr. Morris, Joseph Smith must in no wise be confused with the many reformers who have founded sects, nor is he to be regarded as no better than Calvin, Mother Eddy, or, let me add, Baha'u'llah. For, like all the rest, Smith did not found a sect. He was simply an instrument in the hands of God for the establishment of the Church of Jesus Christ in these days of apostasy. All churches were wrong and Joseph Smith was sent to set them right. The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints claims no apostolic succession, for all priesthoods save its own, have gone off after the whore of the world. It claims rather an apostolic restoration. And in achieving this, says Morris, "Joseph Smith stands exactly where the ancient prophets stood: in direct communication with heaven, acting under divine commission and authority. After being ordained to

the Holy Priesthood at the hands of resurrected men, he became the mouthpiece of God, and with the authority and keys of the Apostleship, under divine instruction he organized The Church."

Smith became known as the Prophet, Seer, and Revelator. Not only is he so regarded today by Mormon followers, but, "As a matter of fact, that triple title descends perpetually to his successors in office. We cannot see how any other kind of person can properly and legitimately hold the keys of Presidency in *The Church of Christ. . . .*"

Joseph Smith is one prophet who is not without honour even in his own Church today. For Morris regards prognostication under divine guidance as one of the essentials of prophecy and he essays to show wherein the Prophet of the Mormon Church foretold events which history is fast vindicating. He asks, "Who but God knows the future?" and answers "Only those to whom He has revealed it." And he goes on to say that from 1824 to the day of his unfortunate and untimely death, Joseph Smith had divine revelation for the enlightenment of mankind.

One of these had to do with the Civil War, and by a slight stretch of the imagination with the World War. In 1832 Joseph heard a voice from heaven saying that the fracas between the North and South would begin in South Carolina—which wasn't a bad guess, for as Morris is generous enough to point out, "A state of rebellion actually existed in South Carolina at the very time the prophecy was made." The breach must have been obvious, even in its details, to even a prophet in those days, for South Carolina was in open rebellion against the Union and its Senator was pounding Charles Sumner over the head with a cane in Washington for his uncomplimentary remarks. Joseph Smith also prophesied other amazing details, such as the fact that brother would be ranged against brother and father against son, which was just as inevitable as his other prophecy to the effect that the Southern states would call upon "other nations, even the nation of Great Britain, as it is called, and they

will call upon other nations in order to defend themselves against other nations."

This latter statement is taken by Morris to be a reference to the World War, which was followed by flood, famine, and pestilence, just as the divine seer had forewarned. There were many other prophecies—among them the prediction that the Saints would be persecuted, —a safe enough bet—that many would apostasize, which was even safer, and that others would be put to death. Still another was that many of the Saints would die of exposure and disease, a prophecy which Brigham Young fulfilled when he started the pilgrims out across the prairies toward Utah at the beginning of winter, with the result that almost a third of the original number lost their lives. Joseph also told Stephen Douglas point blank that, though his chances to become President were great, if he ever turned against the Mormons, hell and destruction would befall him. Douglas joined the attack upon the Saints and another prophecy was fulfilled. As Smith predicted, Douglas felt "the weight of the hand of God upon him."

So it goes. I think I have cited enough to show the astounding veneration in which the founder of the church is held. He laid the foundations of a great inland empire and built a church which this year maintains two thousand missionaries in the field and recently erected a six hundred thousand dollar temple in Canada, and one costing two hundred thousand dollars in Hawaii. Starting in 1830 with six members and few prospects, it now has a membership of more than half a million, an organization dominating an area of over two hundred thousand square miles, and an income of approximately four million dollars a year.

III

Immediately John the Baptist had finished speaking to Smith and Cowdery, they were ordered to baptize each other. This they did, and the Holy Ghost fell upon

Cowdery, who "stood up and prophesied many things which should shortly come to pass,"—which things, as Snowden points out, Smith discreetly failed to record. Later, as I have shown, the fuller baptism of heaven, which conferred upon them the higher priesthood, came upon the men, and their positions were henceforth above that of the Pope of Rome, having been bestowed by a special act of God and not endlessly transferred through an apostate apostolic succession. The brethren spread the doctrine, and Smith began having the revelations to which he was addicted throughout his career. Finally six members of the community were rounded up and the church established. Of this church Smith and Cowdery were the first and second elders, but as the organization grew, it became more complex, until it flowered into the involved theocracy which marks the church today. Smith got his guidance on polity from a series of revelations, and, as one of the Twelve Apostles of the Church said recently, "The Church's organic constitution was made in heaven." David Whitmer in his "Address to Believers in the Book of Mormon" naïvely remarks that when Brother Joseph sought the Lord's mind on any point of moment, "of course a revelation would come just as they desired it." In one of these revelations, made in June, 1829, the appointment of Twelve Apostles for the modern apostolic church was ordered and Smith himself was directed to become Seer, Revelator, and Prophet, with the understanding that his functions should devolve upon his successors. The organization which Smith worked out persists today. It is a glorious hierarchy with authority centered in "the ruling sultan of the Church." Associated with him are two counsellors, and the three constitute the "first presidency," who are the modern counterparts of Peter, James, and John. Next in order is the patriarch, a figurehead who can have visions but not revelations. This office seems to have been created for the Smith family, and has never been of more than perfunctory importance. Then follows the order of the Twelve Apostles, the first one of whom has authority equal to the combined authority of the other eleven. They discharge

the services of the church, administer baptism and communion, and are in line for the presidency.

Below the Twelve are the quorums of the seventies. Snowden explains that these bodies comprise elders divided into groups of seventy, of which groups there are now about one hundred and fifty. Each group of seventy has seven presidents, and every seven of the seventies has a president, and all of these presidents constitute a quorum. The presidents occupy the station of subordinate apostles and they are the missionaries and propagandists of the church. Then there are the high priests, who are really surrogates, and the two orders of priesthood, that of Aaron and that of Melchizedek. The dignitaries form the latter, and the former is given over to a concern with the practical affairs of the church. It is headed by a bishop, whose function it is to supervise the collection of tithes.

Few stories in our history are so rich or seamy as the story of the Mormon conquest of the wilderness. Were it not for the hardship worked upon the ladies, there would be ground for thinking that the Saints deserved the pleasures of polygamy in reward for their heroism and suffering. Smith and his elders soon found the clime at Palmyra unfavourable to the growth of the new religion, there being in that city certain ones who regarded him and the whole Smith family as a pack of liars and fakirs, so he dispatched several of the brethren on an expedition of reconnoitring in the West. These brethren got as far as Kirtland, Ohio, where they met and overthrew the masterful Sidney Rigdon, a roaring Campbellite preacher who held the countryside within the sway of his pulpit influence. The Gentile theory is of course that Rigdon knew about the Book of Mormon all along and that his conversion was a fraud. Whatever the other facts, this fact is certain: He became an open and aggressive convert to the cult of Joseph Smith, and within several months after his capitulation, there were more than a thousand Mormons in and about Kirtland. The time and land were ripe for the explosive and miraculous conquest by the new faith with its Golden Bible, its sudden

miracles, its real flesh and blood prophet whose name was Smith but who had none the less seen God face to face and been commissioned by him to restore the Church on earth. A study of the period shows that the Kentucky revival had swept the land several years before, that the Millerites were soon to come, and that the Shakers were setting up communities in Ohio at this very time—1829–1831. Everything was favourable for the establishment of a new American frontier religion which would give the people the same incentive to conquer the wilds as the Israelites had many years before. The Mormons have been known among friends and foes as superb colonizers, and for the good reason, I believe, that they made a religion of it. They regarded themselves called of God to go out from the land of Pharaoh, and to found the walls of Zion in the great open spaces of the West. Mormonism was the religion of the pioneer. The Saint laboured not because he wanted merely a home and liberty of conscience, but because he was profoundly convinced that he formed a part of the chosen people of the earth and that he moved under the direction of Almighty God just as obviously as did the children of ancient Israel. The inclusive missionary work of the church began just here, and the Saints went "by twos and without purse or script," not only West but into Canada and back into New England as well, meeting everywhere with astonishing success. The converts were bundled up and sent to the New Jerusalem, which Joseph Smith decided to establish in Ohio, though he had a lustful eye upon Missouri.

Opposition got under weigh, for the sect grew in stature by leagues daily. Alexander Campbell bellowed against it, and the solid citizens began to see a menace. All the while the Church of Jesus Christ flourished unabatedly. Kirtland, Ohio, was laid out in a fashion appropriate for the City of God and a monster temple, with a spire 123 feet high, was built. But the business enterprises which were put on foot turned out less successfully than the spiritual ones. A general store failed lamentably. Smith and Oliver Cowdery and Rigdon went off on a wild-goose chase to Salem, Massachusetts, where, they were

told, a buried treasure of gold was to be found in a vacant house. "The Safety Society Bank," which floated a hundred thousand dollars worth of bills "for the accommodation of the public," refused to redeem the bills, for that, said Rigdon, would defeat the purpose of the venture. The state law came into operation, Rigdon and Smith were tried and convicted. Their case was appealed, but they were out of the state before a final decision was reached.

All this while the Prophet Joseph Smith was behaving like an ordinary fellow. He told a convert who had come from Canada to join his church, "not to bray so much like a jackass," and his tact in other dealings was of a similar cut. He was arrested on a charge of having hired two Mormons to kill a farmer who had been outspoken in his denunciation of the cult, but he was discharged. He had also begun his polygamous hankering and practices, according to Linn, though the divine revelation approving plural wives had not yet been handed down to him. The suspicion of polygamy was in the air, and the church issued a pronunciamento saying that they would not approve that ungodly thing. The statement was sufficiently strong to indicate that the charges had been frequent and violent. On the night of March 25, 1832, Smith and Rigdon were disapproved of in a genuine American way; they were tarred and feathered by a band of respectable citizens who held them to be peculiar and therefore better dispensed with.

By now Kirtland was no better clime for the Church of Jesus Christ and the Holy City of Zion than Palmyra, New York. The Saints fell to bickering among themselves. There were dissensions and charges of gross immorality, and in January, 1838, Smith and Rigdon, having made a final stand against the charges brought against them, left Zion on horseback and never returned.

Joseph Smith had had the feeling that Kirtland might not be Zion after all. Missouri seemed more likely, and like Joshua of old, he sent emissaries across to spy out the land and see that it was good. These returned and, continuing the drama of early Jewish history which the Mor-

mons felt themselves to be re-acting, they described the land as one "flowing with milk and honey, upon which there shall be no curse when the Lord cometh." Smith and a small band of his followers went over into Missouri as early as 1831, and immediately a revelation showed him that this was really the Promised Land after all. Emigration from Kirtland was provoked by Smith, and in less than two years the Mormons numbered more than twelve hundred in and around Independence, Missouri, and were one-third of the population of Jackson County. Opposition grew apace, however, and the solid citizens soon warned the Mormons that they would have to move on. Smith got a revelation saying "Zion shall not be moved out of her place," a prophecy which the Mormons still regard as good, for they intend some day to return to Independence and erect a gala temple there. But Zion was moved temporarily, for the attacks upon the Mormons continued and they were forced to move into Clay and other counties to the north. Shortly afterwards they founded the town of Far West, and it was to this place that Smith fled when he left Ohio in 1838. Several of the high authorities of the church were promptly expelled for their continued opposition to Smith, and once more a temple was built with great pomp and ceremony.

Opposition grew, if indeed any room was left for growth, and a state of virtual civil war prevailed. Governor Boggs made an ass of himself and martyrs of the Mormons by assembling four hundred militia men and declaring that the Mormons "must be exterminated or driven from the state," as enemies to the commonwealth, Smith and Rigdon were brought to trial and the venue changed from one county to another, until finally the two escaped into Illinois. The sovereign state of Missouri tried for years to get the culprits back, but to no avail.

In Illinois the disconsolate band of God's people fared better for a while. They were strong enough to purchase land in the little town of Commerce, which they promptly named Nauvoo, a word Joseph Smith, linguist that he was, took to be a word of Hebrew origin mean-

ing "a beautiful place." They waxed strong financially and numerically, strong enough so that they became a political force, and both contending parties in the state capital sought to please them. The result was that the city of Nauvoo was given a special charter which guaranteed it privileges tantamount to those of a separate community, providing even for an army of militia under the command of Joseph Smith to protect the peace of the place and to be used as General Smith saw fit. This time the spire rose to a height of a hundred and sixty feet and the whole building cost more than a million dollars. A timely revelation showed that Zion had been moved from Jackson County, Missouri, to Nauvoo. This stately edifice disappeared entirely with the Mormons, and the place is now marked by a small town of scarcely thirteen hundred inhabitants, boasting only two modern buildings. For a while, however, it was entirely prosperous. Smith, flushed with fresh victories, decided to run for President of the United States, having tried in vain to get both candidates at the time to commit themselves to Mormon favouritism. An editorial announcing Smith's candicacy appeared in *Times and Seasons,* and immediately earnest Saints went east and west and north and south to stir the political waters. It is claimed that as many as three thousand speakers were put into the field and these were diligently dividing the Word when Joseph Smith met his Golgotha. The trouble was precipitated when Smith's lackeys, at his command, destroyed the office of the Nauvoo *Expositor,* a paper which had been launched to show the horrors of Mormon rule and practice. Smith was arrested, and again released, whereupon he issued a blood and thunder proclamation against the enemies of Zion. This had little effect save that of troubling already seething waters. Within a short time a public meeting was held down the river and a war of extermination declared against the Mormons. Governor Ford promised to protect Smith and his associates if they would surrender. With his brother Hyrum and John Taylor, Smith gave himself over to the protection of the state. The Carthage Greys, a body of citizens especially

hostile to the Mormons were selected, either through stupidity or foresight, as guards. On the morning of June 17, 1844, members of this body forced their way up the stairs to the room in which the prisoners were confined, and began firing. Hyrum was killed at once. Taylor was wounded. Joseph Smith was struck as he leaped from a window, crying eloquently, "O Lord, my God."

That was the end of Zion in Illinois. The Smith Brothers were buried with solemn pomp from the Temple altar, though tradition has it that their bodies were not in the coffins which were carried to the graves but had really been buried the night before and that they now repose in unmarked graves along the Mississippi.

Upon the scene just here stalks the man who made Mormonism what it is. Brigham Young was a Methodist before he became a Mormon. He came, like Smith, from the native state of Calvin Coolidge. He was unschooled in youth, a jack-of-all-trades, and he cast his lot with Smith while the Saints tarried at Kirtland, Ohio. He kept quietly in the background from the time of his baptism up to the time of the tragedy at Nauvoo. At that time he was off campaigning for Smith in New Hampshire. Quickly he returned to headquarters, and with the giant wisdom that he showed on most occasions, kept the matter of Joseph Smith's successor appropriately unsettled until he could himself gain the ascendancy. Rigdon asserted his claims, but Young had him expelled from the church for his pains. He went without muttering, attempted to found a church of his own, which, like most of the Mormon sects, failed utterly, and died without further saintly activities. Whatever he knew about the Book of Mormon, which, it is alleged, he contrived with Smith, he never told.

Meanwhile Young managed the church as head of the Twelve Apostles until 1847, when he was chosen President. William Smith, brother of Joseph and Hyrum, put in his claims, but they were passed unnoticed. He paid his respects to Brigham Young as the greatest tyrant since the days of Nero, and laid the foundation for the only successful apostasy ever accomplished against the Mor-

mons. It was not until 1860, however, that Joseph Smith, son of the Prophet, was ordained as the true successor to his father; here there sprang into being the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, a body which has come to be known as the Josephites. They stood always against polygamy and Brigham Young and have shown those same qualities of aggression and enterprise that have characterized all Mormon activity. The Josephites now number a hundred thousand members and have two hundred missionaries in the field. In fact, they have invaded Utah, where they claim a thousand adherents.

But the brayings of discord never for one moment fazed Brigham Young. Already the state of Illinois had warned the Saints that they must go. By the early part of 1846 the greater part of the Mormons had made their way across the Mississippi and established the Camp of Israel on Sugar Creek in Iowa. Here began their actual exodus, their supreme venture of faith, and here the feeling that they were the children of God and the modern counterparts of Abraham and Moses served them in best stead. The Middle West was Egypt to them. Nothing remained but to head for the uncertain land beyond the Rockies. They started, "they knew not whither."

Brigham Young had at this time his first and only revelation. It was characteristic. It offered none of the sanctimonious poppycock with which Smith had doctored all of his. It had to do with practical items and it descended into Scriptural anachronisms only for a moment at the close. The scheme was this: Some of the Saints were to go in advance and prepare fields of grain and habitations for those who were yet to come. Four months after it was issued the whole body had reached the Missouri River and established a temporary village near the site of what is now Omaha. All the while, for months afterwards, stragglers, comprising converts from the East and from Europe, kept arriving at the place established.

From this point a pioneering expedition under Brigham Young set out for the Rockies. By the first of June

they were more than five hundred miles from the starting point and over five hundred miles from the Great Salt Lake. Here if ever was demonstrated the final perseverance of the Saints, for in July they came suddenly upon a broad and fertile valley, at the end of which glistened the waters of the Great Salt Lake. There could be no doubt that God had put that lake there for this very moment: "The Land of Promise—held in reserve by the hand of God for the resting place of his Saints."

At the risk of tedium I must emphasize the religious motive which spurred this conquest of the Rockies. These men were more than pioneers; they were apostles to whom God had promised earthly as well as heavenly reward. They began their journey with divine assurance, they completed it with divine vindication. They were the chosen people of the modern world, led out of the wilderness by a doppelgänger of Moses, and into a land as rich and bountiful as Canaan ever dared to be.

Repeated streams of emigration followed hard upon the heels of the explorers until within a few years more than three thousand Saints were gathered in the Western Zion. Only one disaster marred the glory of the enterprise. That was the hand-cart expedition which so abundantly fulfilled the prophecy of Father Joseph that "many should die of exposure." Brigham Young, staunch executive that he was, wanted very much to speed up production and curtail the operating expenses. He concluded in 1855 that the heavy wagons and other items of equipment were quite needless and that a light hand-cart could be used just as effectively to transport the Lord's people. Accordingly he issued a proclamation to Elder Richards in Liverpool that the next expedition should foot it and haul its baggage in the carts.

The results of that expedition only serve to show what colossal mistakes those who can build empires sometimes make. To begin with, the carts were not ready when the thirteen hundred immigrants arrived at Iowa City to begin the trek of eleven hundred miles across the plains. Here was delay, and a winter was coming on. The carts were equipped for carrying only the lightest loads. Five

companies started, some as late as July and August. In the face of the divine edict Elder Levi Savage warned these companies that they would never make it. He was properly rebuked for lack of faith and the companies began the trek.

Soon the sick and aged began to fall by the wayside. The carts broke down and were constantly in need of repair. Sickness spread rapidly among the ranks, and to aggravate it all, winter caught the Saints in the mountains. The scenes that followed are terrible even to remember. John Chislett, a member of the expedition, has written a superb and graphic account of it all in Stenhouse's *Rocky Mountain Saints.* The whole of it was tragical in a terrifying Russian way, and all because, as Chislett says, the people's greatest "sin was believing with a faith too simple that God would for their benefit reverse the order of nature." Of the company of six hundred of which he was a member, over one fourth were frozen to death. Other companies suffered proportionate losses and it was a bedraggled and pathetic crowd of Saints who staggered into Zion.

But already stone upon stone the foundations of the gigantic Mormon empire had been placed, and reverses could not destroy the foundations so ably laid. The people of the Lord flourished, even as the ancient Jews had promised that they would flourish. Wealth and influence accumulated and within a quarter of a century the whole of the territory of Utah was under saintly domination. Only the efforts of the federal Government to stop polygamy in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century taught the American people the extent and depth of the grasp which the Latter-Day Saints had upon the commonwealth of which they were a part. From that time on they began to be referred to as a national abscess which ought to be removed from the body politic.

IV

As we have seen, in the early days of their sainthood, the Mormons denied the doctrine of polygamy and set

their faces steadfastly against its practice. There is, however, what may roughly be called evidence to show that Joseph fell into the practice of it out of pure love of woman-flesh in the early days of his Prophetic incarnation, and it was not surprising that he received a revelation condoning, nay, enjoining the practice, in 1843. This revelation did not become a part of the official creed of the church until 1852, when it was announced at Salt Lake City, and it has since remained an undeleted section of the amazing creed of the American Mohammedans. Once begun, the saints took to the new requirement with a vengeance. It was a source of spiritual blessing which they did not propose to leave untapped. It grew of course, from the practices of the Old Testament and was but a logical extension of the favourite Mormon idea that the Latter Day Saints were the modern representatives of the Lord; it only pressed the analogy with the children of Israel just a bit further than it was pushed when they set forth to find the Land of Promise in the Western part of the United States. It is very definitely tied up, too, with the Mormon belief in the other world —that a man's relations go on to the glory land and that women need to have some men on the golden streets to care for them. It insured an abundant progeny and, by a logical bit of thinking, insured that many more inhabitants in heaven.

The extent of its practice is a matter which cannot be discussed without the introduction of documents which the space for this epitome does not allow. Writing in 1857, however, Elder John Hyde describes Salt Lake City in such a manner as the following, "Wilford Woodruff and five wives reside in another large house still further West," and so on. There is one delightful account written by the apostate wife of Brigham Young, published under the modest and abnegating title, *Wife No. 19*. She declared that the marriage of mother and daughter to the same man was so common as not to be commented upon, and that she had often heard little girls talk of growing up and "marrying Papa." She further affirms that the leaders encouraged the ladies to withdraw

from the eligibility lists as soon as they grew unattractive but allowed the saints to philander up to the age of one hundred. Brigham married her after she was divorced from another man, and, so she says, simply because he wanted to show her that his will was stronger. She remained in the clutches of the villain for several years, until he shipped her to a farm and she deserted both him and the faith and spent the rest of her life lecturing on the evils of polygamy.

In 1870 a giant debate on the Biblical sanction of polygamy was held in the Temple at Salt Lake City, with Professor Orson Pratt, one of the Twelve Apostles, chosen by Brigham Young as the spokesman of the Mormon practice and the Reverend Dr. John P. Newman, chaplain of the United States Senate, opposing the doctrine and practice. The whole affair was based on the Bible. The debate arose when Dr. Newman preached a sermon in Washington declaring that the Bible taught monogamy. He was challenged. Skirmishes ensued and the debate was arranged. It lasted three days, with each speaker allotted an hour a day.

Pratt, true to Mormon form, began by showing that the Israelites practised polygamy. He went rapidly on to modern conditions, showing that the resumption of Biblical practice was calculated to put brothels out of business: "For who does not know that females as a general thing would rather be married than prostitute themselves as they do at the present time?—and they would lie in wait in order that they might entrap this man and that man and the other man for the purpose of being married to get out of those brothels."

But the government refused to see the blessings of the system of the pertinence of Biblical arguments. Once the people were free of preoccupation with the Civil War, they began to look about for other national concerns, and with eagerness saw the menace of Mormon polygamy, a blight upon the fair name of the land to be removed at all costs. Presidents Garfield, Arthur, and Cleveland pronounced against the system, and Arthur signed the first effective bill against it, in 1881. It provided that Mor-

mons who had plural wives should not be allowed to act as jurors, and seemed, at the time, to sew the situation up.

This law was strengthened in 1887, and the very existence of Mormon integrity threatened. Whereupon the leaders of the cult denounced it roundly and the members of the flock saw little need to obey its rigid provisions. As it stood the Edmunds law practically disenfranchised any man who had two wives. This the Mormons regarded as persecution of the most bitter sort, and in 1885 the First Presidency issued a proclamation saying, in small part:

> Upward of forty years ago the Lord revealed to his church the principle of celestial marriage. . . . Who would suppose that any man in this land of religious liberty would presume to say to his fellow-man that he had no right to take such steps as he thought necessary to escape damnation?

The Utah Territorial Commission began its work in 1882, and within two years more than twelve thousand Mormons had been disenfranchised.

The result was that in 1889 the non-Mormons put over a candidate for Mayor, electing him by a majority of forty-one, and putting the words Mene, Tekel, Upharsin on the walls for Mormonism. In 1890 the Supreme Court of the United States affirmed the decision of a lower court confiscating the entire property of the Mormon Church and declaring that church to be organized rebellion. The Mormons saw that the time for concession was at hand.

President Wilford W. Woodruff, eighty-three years old at the time, issued the manifesto against the practice in 1890. He had seen his share of women in his day, but he promised that it was his intention to abide by the laws of the land in the future, and he called upon his brother Saints to do likewise. This manifesto was affirmed by the General Conference of the Church in 1891. Thirteen months later Woodruff explained to the world that the step had been taken because Jesus Christ laid it upon his heart and the heart of his brethren. Amnesty was granted by President Harrison and the property of the Church restored.

Whether the laws of the land were obeyed is doubtful. J. F. Gibbs, formerly a Mormon, charges specifically in

his book, *Lights and Shadows of Mormonism,* that John W. Taylor and Abraham H. Cannon married plural wives after the amnesty proclamation, and supplies the proof. The same charge was made and proven before the Senate committee investigating the eligibility of Apostle Reed Smoot. And in 1906 a majority of the committee of the Senate reported that the Apostle Smoot was not entitled to a seat because he was one of the body high in church circles who favoured a continuation of polygamy.

The facts remain that the celestial marriage arrangement still is written in the laws of the church and that, if it is obeyed, it is out of expediency. For the Mormons believe in its divine authenticity as firmly as the Methodists believe in the witness of the Spirit, or the Dukhobors in no marriage whatsoever. Everywhere among the Mormons prevails the most credulous and naïve acceptance of the revelations of Joseph Smith.

So far as I am able to determine, the Saints still wear their long, peculiar drawers as a part of the faith. Wife No. 19 was promised that she should be a celestial queen and should receive the Endowments of the order. She tells of having been led into a bathroom, where she was abluted and then anointed from head to foot with olive oil. She was next given the sacred drawers, "like a child's sleeping-robe, with waist and drawers combined." It reaches from the neck to the feet and is of white, bleached muslin, and *"untrimmed."* Everyone who has received the Endowments, a peculiar series of ceremonies initiating the Mormons into the inner mysteries, wears this. Wife No. 19 was charged never to remove it, and it is said that Smith would never have been shot if he had not neglected to don his holy underwear the morning of his arrest. Those who receive their Endowments are buried in the paraphernalia of the inner cult—cotton drawers, white shoes and stockings, and the fig-leaf apron which the neophytes put on as a part of the initiation ceremony.

As I have once indicated, the practice of polygamy is definitely tied up with the belief in the after world. Harriss and Butt, in their apologia, *The Fruits of Mormonism,* point out that one of the elements of celestial joy

is the proper marital condition. Plural marriage, they say

> . . . found its justification in the possibility it afforded for a large posterity which would contribute to eternal joy. Making marriage eternal has greatly added to the race's chastity. . . . It has likewise materially lowered the divorce-rate and heightened the birth-rate.

Along with the Theosophists and Swedenborgians, the Mormons believe in eternal progression beyond the grave. In a sermon delivered in 1844, Joseph Smith declared: "God Himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man and sits enthroned yonder in the Heavens." The author of *Joseph Smith the Scientist* quotes this statement of the Prophet: "Man is to develop until, in comparison with his present condition, he becomes a God."

There are planes to the Mormon heaven. The Celestial Kingdom is reserved for the really blessed and exalted. Those who have died in ignorance of the true gospel and those who are merely honourable by the codes of man go to the Terrestial Kingdom. The Telestial Kingdom is where the unbelievers go and remain with the devil until the last resurrection. Far below is the old-time hell, reserved for the sons of perdition who have stiffened their necks and remained in sin.

It is a cardinal tenet of Mormon theology that the living can be baptized for the dead. Apostle Talmadge tells us that the gospel is being preached in the spirit world today and that the living must submit to the ordinances on behalf of those who have passed on. Joseph Smith solemnly affirmed that Elijah the prophet of ancient Israel appeared in the Temple erected by the Saints at Kirtland, Ohio, and effected the fulfilment of Malachi's predictions, giving to the Saints the injunction that they save those in the spiritual world who have gone on before without the blessings of the true faith.

So much for the American religion. In no particular, so much as in its efficiency and aggressive propaganda, is it so characteristically American. It has worked by means of shrewd organization and clever engineering. Missionaries were among the first of the enterprises of the

Church and today two thousand are kept in the field, "without purse or script," though of course the Saints live off of converts and prospects and other members of the body. As early as 1837 missionaries were sent to England. In 1840 Orson Hyde was sent on a special mission to the Jews in London, Amsterdam, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. And the same year, says Stenhouse, "missionaries were sent to Australia, Wales, Ireland, the Isle of Man, and the East Indies." By 1860 they were scattered all over the world from the Cape of Good Hope to Iceland. By 1851 there were reported to be over fifty thousand converts in England, some seventeen thousand of which had emigrated to Zion.

Whatever else may be said of it, Mormonism has shown vitality. It has demonstrated that a religion can flourish evangelically and financially without historical truth of any sort beneath it. It is only necessary that the people believe in what is alleged to have happened. The Mormons do. It is not the facts of their origin viewed objectively that accounts for their astonishing growth, but rather the fact that the Saints believe in these facts. They have grown with the land. They were born in a revival, they were led of God across new frontiers, they prospered and amassed wealth, and they are now faced with that perplexity which faces all religious bodies: How shall youth be led to see the divine glory of the old system? And the answer probably is that they won't.

XVIII

THE MAID OF ANGELUS

I

MRS. AIMEE SEMPLE MCPHERSON has had more than her share of publicity as a vaudevillian. But the good lady's charms and capers have so consumed the attention of our writers that her mysterious labours have somehow escaped us. It is for the very reason that Sister herself has been the centre of attraction that I wish in brief to sketch the cult she has established and point to its similarities to other cults at present functioning in the democracy. After all, she is not an individual, however winsome and striking she may be on parade. She is a goddess in the eyes of her followers, and their number is legion. She is the executive of a vast and enormously successful enterprise, the geometric centre of a theophany. Those loyal zealots who make up the horde of her patrons care only in a most incidental way, I fancy, for her ankles and for her devilish ways. There are other sentiments to the fore in their loyalties. We must deliver ourselves of the feeling that the woman's radiance and charm are the essentials of her success; her charm is but another token of her priesthood—and it is not a thing to be considered sensually or practically as so many columnists are likely to consider it. Those who gape lovingly at her as she emerges from the inner sanctuary and takes her place within a shrine of flowers as the holy service opens are doubtless moved by the figure and grace of the woman, but unconsciously. The emotions they feel are those commonly associated with the loftiest realm of the spirit. She offers not merely a spectacle but a religious spectacle; she is not merely a performer but a performer

made the centre of a whole display of heavenly fireworks.

Let the financial element be forgotten for a moment. It is of no importance to those who bow before the shrine in Angelus; for, if I may be suffered a tedious platitude, the property of the order is an effect and not a cause. Back behind all the outward show of worldly wealth and opulence are ideas and emotions. It is these which it is most fascinating and informing to explore. Aimee may be a financier, but she is something more; she is a financier of spiritual ideas, custodian of sacred experiences, an oracle of health and happiness. She is all these before she is a financier, and if it were not for her ability to traffic in religion and if she did not understand the basic elements which make up religious behaviour, she would be at best a moderately well off real estate agent in the Middle West, with little more than a comfortable home for her widowed mother.

We Americans, particularly if we live in villages or have moved from villages to cities, are quick to herald a new messiah. We have a mania for incarnations. We must coagulate about some prophet and make him the object of our adoration and loyalty. We are for ever on the look-out for something tangible. If we look intimately at the work which Sister does or if we but inspect the scene in and around the Church of J. Frank Norris in Fort Worth, Texas, we find operating there all the primitive elements which make the religion of mankind. Both of these Churches—the Angelus Temple in Los Angeles and the First Baptist Church of Fort Worth—are religions in miniature, comprising every component to be found on a large scale in any of the world religions.

Norris came out of the sticks of Texas not a great many years ago, found that the church to which he had been assigned was, not unlike a great many others in the vicinity, moribund. There followed certain sensational events—among them the burning of his church and the mysterious bullet fired through the window of his study. He was tried for arson. Now the work of the Lord was gloriously on foot. The sleepy cow-town was waked up by the rumpus in court. People began to flock to his serv-

ices, and it was not many months before he exercised an influence which made many of his fellow Protestant clergymen regard him as a menace. He fell out with his denominational headquarters. Evolution came along, and evolution has made many a great preacher. Then followed the menace of Catholicism. By now Norris had become a fighter of the first water. A row arose over some Catholic property; the pastor charged the Mayor with graft and conspiracy with the Pope; a friend resented the charge; circumstances developed; D. E. Chipps, the friend, called upon the pastor and was killed in his study. Norris a few months later was freed on the ground of self-defence.

And that, by the way, is the ground upon which he has always been freed and upon which he has always succeeded. He was a man whose mind was sufficiently far above that of his followers to inspire respect but not envy. He believed as they did and became the aegis of their ideas. He identified himself with their causes, became the champion of their attitudes, and so cleverly insinuated himself into their affections and emotions that they took any attack upon their sacred beliefs to be an attack upon him. The members of the circle learned to regard him as the blood and flesh of the high principle anti-Catholicism, of White Supremacy, of literal and reverent scriptural interpretation. Obviously, then, he has become more than the common mangy pastor of the Texas prairies. His band has stood as solidly for him in the midst of litigation and scandal as the devotees of Angelus. He knows the religious value of paranoia and he turns events into persecutions as quickly as the followers of Pastor Russell. The lamented Chipps of course came as the arch tool of a conspiracy to murder him. The local authorities are leagued against him, and consequently against righteousness, when on behalf of iniquity they prosecute him for arson and perjury or indict him for murder. To all practical appearances and as far as the human side of religious behaviour is concerned, J. Frank Norris is the god of his tribe, the centre of its affections, the object of its loyalties, and the totem of its beliefs. His

cult is one of those local phenomena that are common in America, and the only thing extraordinary about it is the sharpness of its lines. We witness within the regular borders of the orthodox church the coagulation of a group of zealous followers about a single person whose doctrines are not distinct but simply harsher than those of fellow priests; we find these zealous followers ready at a moment's notice to follow their leader if a rupture comes between headquarters and the local body; we discover that the devotion of the people grows more and more unwavering and that the sect takes on features of distinction until it has developed what is in the end a new cultus. It is the story of Menno, of Mother Ann Lee, of Wesley, of Jacob Amman, of F. N. D. Buchman, of Aimee Semple McPherson.

II

What Doctor Norris has done in a state Aimee Semple McPherson is fast doing in a nation. She has performed on that lavish scale and with the regal ado which counts for everything in this land of silk and money. It can hardly be gainsaid that she possesses a more elaborate sense of the dramatic; but what is of greater importance, she has a keener sense of the religious. She was born in the Canadian wilds and lived on a small farm there until the time of her conversion at the age of seventeen. She lost her faith early in life through the irreverence of the chemistry teacher in the local high school, who made certain snooty remarks about Genesis. She got it back through one Robert Semple, who appeared in her native village to hold a Full Gospel Revival at the time when she felt herself in direst straits. She describes herself as swept completely into the fold by the earnest, rugged, uncompromising gospel which Semple preached. Her conversion at his hands was apparently sound for she went straight home and swept all the ragtime music off the piano and said it would be the Bible and the hymn book for her from then on. And it was.

Not long afterward she was called to the house of a

neighbour to sit up with sick children. As the weary hours of the night wore on, who should come to that house but Robert Semple! He had been holding another meeting in the vicinity and explained his presence merely by saying that he had heard the children were ill and dropped in to see about them. As they sat together, Aimee thanked him for the letters of encouragement in faith he had written her, showed him as best she could what inspiration they had been, and told him proudly that she looked up every scripture reference for the triumph over sin that he had sent her. The conversation moved on until Robert Semple found it in his heart to tell her he had been called to carry the Gospel to idol-ridden China. There was a map in the room. They arose and looked at it together while the evangelist pointed out Hong Kong. She told him then how she longed to be a winner of souls and that nothing would please her more than to have some part in taking the Gospel to China. "No, I wasn't hinting," she explains in her autobiography. But whether she was or not, Robert Semple was willing. He asked her to go and refused to take her answer until the two had knelt together and asked God's will in the matter. As they prayed she felt her hand imprisoned in his, and a few months later they sailed for China.

There her first husband died, and a while later their child was born. She returned to America, lost and lonely without the man she loved. Within a few years she had married again, this time to a New England wholesale groceryman. They married with the understanding that, in the event she ever felt moved to take up religious work again, she should have her freedom. It was not long until she felt so moved. Mr. McPherson went with her for a while, then turned back into the world of business. "But as for my call," she says, "there was no going back. I found truly, as that servant of old, 'Woe is me if I fail to preach the gospel.' " [1]

Woe indeed! She found that as soon as she stepped out

[1] Aimee Semple McPherson, *In the Service of the King* (New York, 1928), p. 139.

of the active work her health began to fail. She suffered a complete nervous and physical breakdown. Insistently the call of the Lord came to her as she hovered between life and death, and finally she answered in the death chamber, "Yes, Lord, I'll go." When she returned to the work her health was restored—yea, even upon her decision to return, and she declares that she has never been sick a day since that moment of wondrous decision, even though her schedule of work at Angelus makes the man-killing job of the Presidency seem recreational.

When she said, "Yes, Lord, I'll go," she meant it. She went first to the mourner's bench and got religion in one of those doses which only a woman of her physique and temperament can stand. This took place in a little village called Berlin before the War and Kitchener after it. As soon as the light came she began work. She turned to the brother on her right and prayed that he too might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Then she offered the evangelist her services. He was a bit timid about taking them and she landed in the tent where dishes were washed, there gladly performing menial service for the King.

That was only the beginning. A while later she was given a chance to paint a sign announcing the revival, and this act is significantly her first great step in the service. She made that sign an item which the villagers talk about to this day. Not long after that she decided to enter the work on her own. She went to help a local pastor with a meeting but the crowds which turned out were negligible. That would never do. She had to have a crowd, and she got it. She took a chair and carried it down to the main corner on the main street. She climbed up on it and started to pray, largely because she didn't know anything else to do. (There has always been this naïve mixture of religious purpose and canny method in her work.) As she tells the incident in her book there is the following touch that lends verisimilitude to the story as a whole:

Almost instantly I heard the patter of approaching feet, then voices, more voices

"What's the matter with her?"
"Dunno."
"What ya reckon it is?"
"Maybe a cataleptic state."
"What kind of a state?"
"Cataleptic; sorta unconscious-like."
"Think so?"
"Sure."

She continued to pray, though she heard enough of what went on about her to record the above conversation with convincing reality years later. As soon as she heard enough folks milling around her chair, she jumped down, took the chair, and crying "Quick! Quick! Come with me!" fairly flew up the street, with the crowd at her heels. "From that day to this," she says, "I have always preached to crowds." [2]

At the end of the first week's service she was reminded by the pastor that she had taken no collection; and with timidity and reluctance she gave the folks a chance to contribute to the work of the Lord. That was her method and it worked as well then as it does today, when she stands in her pulpit with fifty thousand dollars to raise and says, "Now, I'll let only ten of God's children give me a thousand dollars each"; and there is always a scramble and a deal of good-natured rivalry to determine which are the first ten to have their hands in the air. That first night she got sixty-five dollars. She sat up most of the night watching it, she says, and the next day she bought a tent with it. That tent turned out to be moth-eaten, but it gave the opportunity for her first miracle. It threatened one day to rip and the next day it did rip. The whole canvas started to cave. Not knowing what else to do, Mrs. McPherson cried out: "In the name of the Lord, I command you to stay there till the meeting is over." And believe it or not, that tent caught on a protruding nail and stayed.[3]

Her success from this day on was unfailing. She traversed the land with relentless energy and will, going

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 150, 151.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 155.

always where she believed the Lord was leading. She gives us one incident to show the manner in which she was led.

In this particular instance, while in prayer the word "Corona" kept recurring to my mind.

As a contributor to several religious magazines, I had been praying for a Corona typewriter and my first thought was that this was the reason. However, in a few days came the shrill whistle of the postman and the missive that he bore ran:

DEAR SISTER MCPHERSON:

Come at once to Corona, Long Island. Revival clouds are ready to burst on our heads. The Lord hath need of thee."

She didn't know the woman who signed it but the letter bore the hallmark of divine command and the next move she made was to Corona, Long Island. She looked up the address of the one who had summoned her and found there a negro mammy who thought that in view of the sin in Corona and surrounding points, it was 'bout time for a special blessing. No preparations of any sort had been made, but Providence would have its way for her and it was not long until she had pitched the community into the throes of a monstrous upheaval emanating from the Swedish Methodist Church.

The winter was coming on and she felt the call of the Lord to go to Florida for a series of tent meetings. There her success increased and soon she abounded in the knowledge that her work should not be confined to any single sphere or hemisphere. Her healing labours grew apace, and in Florida she healed a man with a broken arm, to the great delight of his wife and to the consternation of a scoffing infidel who warned the man of the McPherson method. This infidel was the apostate son of a Methodist minister and before the evangelist left town she had the pleasure of wiring the father that the prodigal had returned. Her fame grew by leaps and bounds, and the time seemed propitious to move upon California, a state that has always offered abnormal religionists the promise of Canaan. Now occurred a significant and prophetic incident. Her daughter fell ill, and it was only by much wrestling before the throne that the mother was able to save

the life of her own child. But she succeeded, and in her attempt to encourage little Roberta, she promised her a bungalow in California. She simply felt moved to make the promise, and it was not in vain, for later she fulfilled it and threw in a cathedral and a mansion to boot. Little Roberta is now pastor of the junior congregation of Angelus Temple, a congregation that numbers between fourteen and fifteen hundred members at the last church census, though doubtless a few hundred others have been added since.

III

All of this time the lot upon which the Temple now stands was covered with weeds and tin cans, and no paper in Los Angeles had ever carried a line about Aimee Semple McPherson. Four years after she landed in that city she had established a congregation of fifteen thousand, built an edifice seating fifty-three hundred, started on its world-redeeming way a Bible Institute housed in a six-story building, and set up branches of the parent Temple throughout the land.

Did she do it through financial shrewdness? She cannily understands and earnestly takes active part in religious hullabaloos because she believes in them and enjoys them. She is a woman whose mind roves in religious orbits and whose emotions find chief solace in a conspicuously religious atmosphere. Perhaps she is not without guile and possibly she has an eye to the material, but I can see no grounds for the absurd statement made by a great many intelligent writers that she is not religious. If not, then neither was Mohammed. I have heard her proclaim the gospel and I solemnly testify that I have never beheld one more painfully bent upon the salvation of souls than the woman who pounded the Holy Book upon the pulpit before her and shouted with priestly hoarseness that she believed it from cover to cover. She is severely religious, and whatever she has done has been through the instrumentality of organized and buoyant religion.

It was when she reached Los Angeles that she began to hear the commission to build a house unto the Lord. "It was while meditating," she explains, "upon the strange manner of my having been so strongly impressed to come to California . . . that I began to realize that there was a far greater plan back of it all than a bungalow for the babies and that it was the will of the Master that I build a house unto the Lord." She goes on:

> I felt the call to build a Temple of Prayer, but was perplexed as to how far to proceed, until one day, while driving about the city, I came upon a spot—a little paradise in itself—which was then quite a distance from the business district.

Immediately the structure rose in her mind. She caught a vision of thousands coming in from all directions, of automobiles parked for miles, of rich and poor with Bibles beneath their arms pouring into the temple of the Lord. Once started, her thoughts ran riot.

> Going over to the "For Sale" sign posted on the ground, upon which was drawn the shape and dimensions of the lot, I sat down and began to sketch my plans for the temple. The building should be circular in front with a score of crystal glass doors. The interior, with the main floor and two balconies, should be shaped like a great piece of pie with seven aisles in the main floor and every aisle and rampart leading to the altar.[4]

The walls were to be wonderfully tinted and punctured here and there by lurid pictures taken from the life of Jesus; the dome would be a blue, star-studded sky. And it all turned out just that way. Angelus Temple boasts the largest fire-proof auditorium in the world and its grandeur is the subject of comment upon the lips of everyone who has had the high privilege of entering it. It arose in a vision; it swam before the eyes of a woman who had been commissioned to build a house of prayer unto the Lord.

She had not the money at that time, she avers. So there began again that wide and sweeping tour of the continent; activities were even extended over into Australia, which, by the way, has always been a rich field for evan-

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 247.

gelistic endeavour. She took what was given as a love offering and added to this amount the direct gifts of those who had heard of the project. The speed and dimensions of her success need not be recorded here. Suffice it to say that she wrought the whole astounding modern miracle in less time than it took to build the Sherry-Netherland and four years after her first peep at the Pacific she was inaccessibly enshrined in a Temple which has since become the secret envy of every itinerant evangelist.

Of the relation she bore that Temple she never left anyone in doubt—least of all her mother, Mrs. Minnie Kennedy. When during the recent squabble with that lady Sister returned post-haste from Alton, Pennsylvania, she issued this ukase: "Like the captain of a ship or the President of the United States, I am pastor and President of Angelus Temple, and as such am going to control my congregation. I have come back to take the helm."[5] In the account she gives of her singular achievements there is never a mention of anyone save herself and the Lord. Yet the account never reads like that of an egomaniac; it is rather the naïve and straightforward story of a prophet who wrought and does not regard that fact as any marvel. She tells it all with the simplicity born of a crusader's faith.

As for her thousands of devotees, their loyalty is unfailing. She has brought rich and poor together in the fellowship of religion that answers daily and nightly needs. Rich folk, Mrs. McPherson tells us, want to be on the level that all must reach before God. The result was that when the temple was first opened, "they all donned the simple white uniform of the Temple, the plain cotton gown that can be bought for three or four dollars, left their limousines a block away, and walked to the Temple that they might in appearance be one with the joyous multitude."

One has only to read the accounts of their solidarity during the recent kidnapping crisis to understand the sacred manner in which she is regarded. The story of her

[5] New York *Times*, July 24, 1927, p. 21.

kidnapping is familiar. She had been leading a hectic life of service and sought occasional surcease from it in the waters of the Pacific. She reports that it was not uncommon for another car to overtake hers while she was out driving and for her to be rushed to some needy person. She was always acceding to these demands, though she had been repeatedly warned, in view of her frequent attacks upon the underworld, that it might some day lead to disaster. On May 18, 1926, she rushed to Venice, a beach suburb of Los Angeles, for a dip. Her secretary accompanied her, and Aimee took her Bible along to prepare several sermons before she walked into the water. While in for a swim her secretary went to a near-by hotel to telephone and Sister McPherson saw two men and a woman standing on the beach signalling to her. Upon hearing that the woman's baby was seriously ill she went with them to a car, and, as she later charged, was whisked away by the three of them and held until her miraculous escape somewhere over the border of Mexico. When her secretary returned, Sister was nowhere to be seen and the report was circulated that she was drowned. For more than a month she was missing and a memorial fund of twenty-five thousand dollars was raised by the initiates of Angelus. Then one day came an anonymous letter to her mother, saying that she was alive and asking for a ransom of half a million dollars. The Post Office records show, according to the New York *Times* of July 8th, that the ransom letter was delivered to Mrs. Kennedy before the memorial service was held.

On June 24th, the evangelist herself turned up in Agua Prieta, just across the border of Mexico, after having walked twenty miles from the hut of her kidnappers. The vivid account which she gives in her autobiography of her torturous and joyous return to the land of law and order would repay anyone's reading. Here it can only be said that she approached first a slaughter house and that she was directed on into the town, where she fell into a swoon upon a doorstep. She failed later to find this house where first she reached friends, though she made a thorough search for it before leaving Douglas, Arizona. She

failed also to find the hut in which she had been held so long and ended up by offering a five hundred dollar reward for its discovery.

Thanks to a dull season of the year and the growing interest in stories with both religious and sex appeal, she became a nationally known figure. After a period of recuperation, Sister was taken back to Los Angeles on a special train. There she was greeted by what the Los Angeles *Examiner* describes as "a riot of frantic cheering, of shrieking automobile sirens, of factory whistles. . . . Presidents have travelled across the country and found along the way a lesser demonstration." Often her train was halted en route to Los Angeles at wayside junctions, and admirers, many times in the wee hours of the night, would crowd around for one glimpse of the goddess. Once off the train, she was surrounded by a milling crowd of thousands, and she trod upon a carpet of roses. When she appeared first at Angelus Temple she told of her trials to seventy-five hundred listeners. The place was packed, and her story was emptied into the overflow quarters by means of loud speakers.

Then she was brought to court. The authorities had certain questions which they wished to clear up in connexion with her alleged abduction. Five witnesses pointed her out as the woman they had seen at Carmel-by-the-Sea with a man identified as Ormiston, her radio operator. To her followers that trial was nothing but another ghastly Sanhedrin, another travesty before another Pilate. As she entered the Hall of Justice she walked between two lines of white-clad women, each of whom carried a hymn book. The scene of the inquiry was surrounded by five thousand people. Tension was incredible. A band of Temple worshippers bore down upon and demolished a side-show in Los Angeles purporting to dramatize what had actually happened. She was charged with intent to carry out criminal conspiracy and also with falsely and maliciously planning to charge another with kidnapping.

Conspiracy? It was the conspiracy of the underworld. That was the fact that Aimee Semple McPherson

charged most repeatedly before her congregation and in the columns of the papers which carried her syndicated account of the affair. She had been warned to soften her remarks about sin; these warnings she had scoffed. By a very simple and time-honoured method she succeeded in turning the charges of the state into a heartless persecution of her and her flock. In her running account which the newspapers carried she said: "I have waged unrelenting battle with the *Bat-like Demons from Hell* and they fear me and revile me as the Devil hates holy water." The method by which the transfer from her to the Lord and the Lord's people is made may be seen from the following quotation taken from her account:

> Scheme, scheme, scheme, cry the pack, snarling at my heels, biting at God's cloak. . . . It isn't me that my detractors hurt—they do not realize that they are striking at God in their attempt to pull down His temple. . . . Already the wraths of heaven are descending upon those who have accused me. It is not I, but they, the detractors of His servant, who will soon be in the Hades of torment.

Again she says, in a language which smacks strangely of that used by Colonel Simmons: "I am being crucified by the very bats of hell, who have gone the limit in perfidy." The whole world has turned against her, with the exception of the faithful few in the Temple; she is encompassed in a vortex of slander, false accusations, malicious misrepresentations, detractions, calumny. "But it leaves me unscathed. God has seen to that. Hallelujah!"

Nor was she the only one left unscathed. Her congregations would have grown had there been any room for them to grow in. Immediately upon the dismissal of the charges against her she left on another transcontinental tour to spread the Gospel and to set up more lighthouses upon the rugged shoals of America's inland sea of vice. Everywhere she was received by enormous crowds. At Denver the Municipal Auditorium, seating twelve thousand, was given over to her and packed to its capacity. So many converts flocked to the altar there that the stage manager feared for his auditorium, but Sister told him that God would take care of that. Today, despite her tilt with Mrs. Kennedy, and the rare amount of

nasty publicity it got, she stands still unscathed, and her believers unshaken. Can we say that this is not a religious *coup d'état?*

Writing in the February 1928 *Bridal Call Foursquare,* Reverend Oscar Lewis leaves no doubt as to how she is regarded by her followers: "Sister McPherson is your pastor and what a vast congregation Sister enjoys here, but Sister McPherson does not belong to you. She belongs to the races and to God and to the nations." And in the April issue Dr. A. L. Fraser continues the legend by referring to her as one "whose foot like Noah's dove, has found a transient rest in the ark of Angelus Temple, but whose parish is the world." She obviously sustains no ordinary pastoral relationship to her flock.

There are points in which she compares almost line for line with the other great women leaders who have founded sects. In common with Mrs. Besant, Mrs. Eddy, Madame Blavatsky, Mother Ann Lee, she has not found the restraints of married life to her liking. She has the iron will and steel nerve which all of the foregoing have; she hasn't anything like the mind that Mrs. Besant has, nor the harsh and at times vicious temperament of Madame Blavatsky. She has the genius for organization that was Mrs. Eddy's and something the same canny ability to sew up the whole organization. But she has more than any one of them and more than all of them put together, and that is genius for using modern methods in promulgating her sect. She is, let us say, Mother Eddy in modern dress. She is the high priestess of the Twentieth Century.

IV

As a people we pin great faith to organization and mechanical appliances. When the average person thinks of progress, he invokes visions of frigidaire and radio. To the common man of the cities and the open country these contrivances symbolize development. Now here comes a woman obviously blessed of the Lord who makes the maximum use of such devices, until they become in

fact the instruments of salvation. Inventions signalize change and decay in old systems. Thus to find the old system actively at work in Angelus Temple is a most potent and striking evidence, to those who want that sort of evidence, that religion is changeless and eternal, that the Lord is still with us. In brief, Angelus Temple justifies the Twentieth Century religiously.

It is obvious to any serious student of religion that Christianity, founded upon an agricultural economy, has hard sledding in a world so utterly mechanized as ours today. This fact is equally obvious to those credulous and fearful people who make up Sister's congregation. They want to feel at home and lordly in the wretched society that matures there. The world they live in is alien to the spirit, and they welcome with great hearts and rejoicing any attempt to make that world by its own instruments a paradise of religion. Angelus Temple does that. In the first place, the Lord built it. That is the solemn utterance of the pastor and the equally solemn belief of the people. Mrs. McPherson says: "With the hand of the Lord to guide us, it was done. We made of Beautiful Angelus Temple, of the adjoining six-story building of the International Institute of Foursquare Evangelism, places of worship that were open and in use *three hundred and sixty-five days of the year and twenty-four hours of the day.*" Yet if one imagines for a moment that Angelus Temple is no more than a machine of one hundred percent. efficiency, let him observe the spiritual dynamo of the Church. "There is not a minute, day or night, week in, week out," says Sister, "in which Angelus Temple does not lay the golden coin of reverent prayer before the Throne. In the Watch Tower close to the stars for over four years now four volunteers have been constantly and without interruption sending their supplications to God. In two-hour shifts four devoted women pray during the day, each volunteer participating only one shift a week, and during the still hours of the night the men take up the joyous task." Every member of the congregation is a spiritual specialist, ready at all times to help the needy, and even the janitors have been known

to convert sinners in the dead of night while conducting them to the heights of the Watch Tower. Every statistic has loving significance.

Angelus Temple maintains a vast and far-flung service station for quick relief, and it meets the age-old problems of the average sufferer in a modern fashion—modern in the sense that machinery is used for the achievement of good. Mrs. McPherson tells us that daily and nightly the temple receives hundreds upon hundreds of messages—hurry-up calls for help. She reports: "A woman will phone: 'I am despondent. I am going to end it all and I am going to turn on the gas right this minute. If there is anything Angelus Temple can do, for God's sake do it now or it will be too late.' We say, 'Stop! Stop! and tell her the story of Jesus, then run out and get her and she gives her heart to Jesus." It is in order to meet these daily exigencies that the Foursquare Gospel Lighthouse System has decided to install cruisers. They are motor-cars fitted up like efficient life-boats and they are to dash out on emergency calls and bring the despondent ones to the Temple, where relief can be given at once.

It is both mechanics and psychology which Sister uses in the healing services that have made her so adored. She describes in her autobiography the manner in which one of these services is conducted. First there is the singing—rampant, hilarious, ecstatic singing. Then comes the testimony of one who has been previously healed. As the specimen mounts the platform the great organ bellows forth an impressive melody and following that are the words of the man who was once a cripple. Mrs. McPherson notes: "Mentally, they were comparing their ills with his . . . Lo! He stood before them whole. They were all drinking it in. . . ." [6]

When the man had finished the organ pealed out again. There was a growth of exaltation, a growth of power; it grew a thousand fold as the organ played, and soon the audience quivered with its own sense of strength. Then came more singing. "Sweet Hour of Prayer"; "What A Friend We Have in Jesus"; "I Need Thee,

[6] *Ibid.*, p. 225.

Oh I Need Thee." The singing quieted, but still they played a soft obligato. It was at this time that the priestess stepped forward:

> Speaking to them of the necessity of their faith, I told them that the Lord would heal them, but only if they believed in Him; that Christ was the same, with the same compassion, the same power, yesterday, today and for ever.
>
> "I believe! Oh, I believe!"
>
> It was a mighty shout as I finished, an inspiring crescendo of faith from those thousand of weakened throats. But there was no wavering in their voices now, nothing but a high-pitched chorus of eagerness.

The maimed, the halt, and the blind had been carefully marshalled, ready for leading on to the platform. The signal was given at the proper moment and the first sufferer was brought forward. The first one was a paralytic who had not set foot to the ground for years. Turning to her, Sister said, after inquiring as to her faith: "Then the Lord maketh thee whole. Arise and glorify His name!" A tense moment followed, then the woman lame from infancy did walk. At this point, "The organ, full-throated now, poured forth in transcending pæans of praise, 'All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name.' The onlooking throng thundered their hallelujahs. Those waiting in that long line were strengthened in their faith by that which had already come to pass for that one who was first."

In the temple there is a special room reserved for wheel chairs and crutches left as evidences of complete healing. The list of solid cures and the candour of the testimonies available rival those of the School of Silent Unity. But Angelus Temple has the edge on all the cults because it seems merely to restore to full reputability and efficacy the faith that was so long ago delivered unto the saints. From Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand the work of Angelus is growing and spreading rapidly. At present there is no mission in New York, "although we hope sometime in the near future to see the Foursquare Gospel Lighthouse rays flashing across the skies of that metropolis." There are, however, one hundred branch churches scattered throughout the country,

and others coming in all the while. There is one now in the fertile little town of Booker, Texas, for example, and the cult has extended its domain into every territory where the people want a new and simple gospel. Within the past three months two missionaries have left for China and a family of five for the Panama Canal Zone to carry the gospel message to those in darkness. Brother V. A. Howell, missionary to India, reports in the latest issue of the *Foursquare Crusader* that in three weeks the Lord "baptised thirty-five with the blessed Holy Spirit." The first was a young man "who came through in the Telagoo language." Another, a Salvation Army worker, while Howell was preaching, "fell under the power and after eight hours in his baptism came through in the Chinese language." In the amazing scenes which followed "forty-three were baptised with their Lord and some went under the water talking in tongues."

It is the fact of primitive religious emotions and mediæval theology functioning to all appearances so properly in the midst of Twentieth Century machinery that attracts the multitudes and keeps them joyous. It attracts the hang-overs of the last generation and the unstable members of the one now rising. It uses the old hymns that have shaken sinners for a century, the old catch phrases that have put the fear of God into the hearts of sailors and prostitutes, the old assurances that have brought to drab and lowly mammals the sense of peace and kingship in an alien and ominous order of society.

The religion we have within the tinted walls of Angelus is of course not merely apostolic; it is primitive and savage in its naïve spirit. The whole sanctuary has been planned with an eye to theatricality. Songs often punctuate Sister's discourses, so that the effect is precisely that of a group of Negroes wailing their sorrows in prose and suddenly bursting forth into the plaintive and creepy tones of some melodious spiritual. We witness the kind of spectacle one finds among Free Methodist camp meetings on the scorched plains of Texas, where women sweat and howl and kick upon the floor to the glory of the God

of Abraham. And sinewy Sister leads it all. With her *Praise the Lords!* and her reverberating *Hallelujahs!* she leads a lonely and thwarted throng of primitive Americans in the mystic rites of the whirling tribal dance —and all of it takes place in an edifice costing two hundred and fifty thousand dollars and goes out over radio.

To marvel at the success of Sister's venture is only to show one's ignorance of religious history, particularly in America, and to laugh at it is only to show one's failure to understand the rudiments of religious behaviour. After all, Angelus Temple has given us what we regard as most convincing—a well-housed and efficient organization that gets tangible spiritual results. It uses the methods of Steinmetz and Edison to practise the religion of Paul and Silas. It is not surprising that its influence has grown so enormously, for as a people we are mechanically advanced but emotionally primitive.

XIX

THE MENNONITES

SINCE this book was prompted by a friend who asked me why the Mennonites wear hooks instead of buttons on their breeches, I suppose that vital question should be answered first. And I am not sure but that in the answer lies the whole story of these odd people who have withstood so long and successfully the wickedness of modern civilization. Older by two centuries than the Methodists, they yet retain those idiosyncratic customs and beliefs which set them apart and make them singular specimens in the study of modern religious sects. Anyone who in childhood who has come suddenly upon six bearded giants driving a wagon across an Oklahoma creek bottom and has had his inquiries silenced by the mere explanation that they were Mennonites will readily understand why no book on the current religious scene is complete without the Mennonites. They are by long odds the queerest of the lot, and simply because their dress and speech and practices have so thoroughly ostracized and caged them for the inspection of us moderns. The Quakers are always commonplace when one gets to know them, but the Mennonites never are. The Holy Rollers are theatrical, the Mennonites are a permanent exhibit. The Dukhobors withdraw from the haunts of men, the Mennonites live among us and are never known even by those outsiders who associate with them most frequently. Occultists are a worldly lot, followers of eerie and creepy things; the Mennonites are in the world but not of it, sojourners for a time upon this planet but only waiting for the summons to the world above. And whereas occultists take this planet as a matter of course, as a logical junction and stop-over on the end-

less route to higher things, the Mennonites regard it as a mere Siberia to be endured until they are gathered up into everlasting glory.

The truth is that the vast majority have gone over to buttons, have forsaken the traditions of their elders and adopted both buttons and suspenders. In what is commonly regarded as the parent church in America, not only are these devices legal, but even shaving has of late become optional. For despite what I have said, America has cast its sinister influence upon the sect, and the modern world of machine and noise and sin has not left the disciples of Menno uncontaminated. The Shakers perished from the earth because they refused so intrepidly to adapt themselves to the world which grew up about them. The Mennonites have, with worthy and extensive exceptions, made compromises and adjustments and now promise to survive along with the rest of the fittest. The Mennonite Church in America, as the parent body is called, stands today in the halls of the mighty. It has its publishing house, its evangelists, its board of education, and maintains a bustling mission among the heathen of India. What is more, it issues bulletins and has statisticians showing the net gain from year to year. It is competently managed from a financial point of view, sends out journals with dry discussions of God and the Devil, conceals what peculiarities that remain to it, and is on the whole simply another religious body—quite as colourless and enterprising as the Southern Methodists. Its headquarters and efficient organization have placed it upon an equal footing for competition with any of the large denominations, and as the reward of its progressive tactics, the adherents of the body numbered forty-five thousand at the end of 1927. Under the auspices of the Mennonite Book and Tract Society, "over six hundred tracts under as many different titles have been printed by the hundreds of thousands and distributed promiscuously." [1] A first rate and well equipped college is maintained by the body at Goshen, Indiana. Here modernism

[1] L. J. Heatwole, *Mennonite Handbook of Information* (Scottdale, 1925), p. 35.

showed its ugly head as long as twenty years ago, when a group of young professors arose with the idea that the Mennonites were old-fashioned. It was evident that "some of the students were imbibing the corroding and deadly influences of the so-called higher criticism"; immediately the members of the Mennonite Board of Education became alert and with strong arm and pure heart cleaned out Goshen College.

Progressive forces are everywhere in the ascendancy, and though there is an inherent tendency toward conservatism which holds over—almost as a vestigial organ—the Mennonites today are fast becoming standardized, fast coming to repeat the performances of every one of the greatest common denominations.

By dint of efficiency methods and high pressure, the regulars were able to report in 1927 a substantial growth of the fold. "This," the annual report says, "is encouraging and helps to spur us on to do greater things in the coming years, if the Lord tarries." The Mennonites have sallied out to save the world and gather the sinners into the fold before the end finally comes. Their first missionaries were appointed at Elkhart, Indiana, in 1898, and the place to which the Lord led them was Dhamtari in the Central Provinces of India, where they now have twenty-seven missionaries, seven churches, and eleven hundred communicants. The main body comprises fifteen conferences, stretching from ocean to ocean, and the conference in India is large enough to stand alone. It is engaged now in the task of getting the more conservative branches, the old dyed-in-the-wool Mennonites, who constitute some more than a hundred miscellaneous bodies and are by far the most interesting of the lot, into the regular organization. But the work is confessedly slow and tedious. For Mennonism began as a reaction against a reaction and every one of its innumerable cellular divisions since has been a further retrogression toward conservatism. Only the regular church has progressed, and that not far enough to take it completely out of the curious class.

It would be curious to find the number of sects which

have sprung from the holy impulse to put the church once again upon an apostolic basis. The Campbellites may be taken as a classic example, and this motive on the part of the Mormons is too obvious to mention. Both Alexander Campbell, who thundered noisily against Joseph Smith, and the Prophet himself, had this in common: They wanted to restore the primitive church; modern innovations were heresies; the proper movement was backward. This applies as well to the Mennonites. It sprang, in the main, from the profound feeling on the part of certain reformers that the reformation had really not gone deep enough. It is closely linked with the Anabaptist movement, though the regulars today deny and resent the implication that the Mennonites evolved from the Anabaptists. They rather gave force to the Anabaptist movement.

Suffice it to say that the Mennonites, regular, Amish, and conservative, owe their name to the Priest Menno Simons. Menno was a heretic. He was but twelve years of age when Luther sounded the clarion call of the Reformation. After finishing his studies he became a sort of vicar in the village of Pingium, in Germany. Up to this time he had not read the Bible. His associates in the Church had some knowledge of Scripture, but Menno himself declares that he never read it for fear of the contagion of heresy. It was as popular among the priests of his day as "Bad Girl" in Boston today. However, Menno was soon to touch the forbidden fruit, for about 1530 he came to be flagellated with doubts about the mass. These he bore as long as he could, then in desperation, he read the New Testament to reassure himself. The disastrous result was the conviction that transubstantiation was a fable and that the various tenets of the Holy Roman Church had no more ground in the Bible than did the ungodly practice of infant baptism. Mustering his courage, Menno now passed from "the bosom of Rome to the banners of reform," avowing two doctrines, which, as Mosheim says, were looked "upon as flagitous and intolerable heresies." The first was the denial of infant baptism and the second was the baptism of all believers upon

the confession of their sins and the reception of the Holy Ghost.

From then on Menno was chased hither and thither in Europe until his death in 1559. Prior to his apostasy, the Anabaptism movement had gotten under weigh in Switzerland, where Konrad Grebel and Felix Mans, members of the congregation of Zwingli, dissatisfied with the half-hearted reforms which their leader had instituted, went considerably farther and condemned the baptism of infants as the "greatest abomination of the devil and the Roman pope." They likewise set out to re-establish apostolic Christianity and sought to preserve only the two ceremonies which Christ used on earth, the Lord's Supper and Baptism. They denied the authority of civil government, rejected the paid ministry and the use of the sword, and became the objects of intolerable persecution throughout the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries. It was with these scattered and often fanatical devotees that the former priest of the Holy Church, Menno Simons, identified himself. He became their spokesman; he made their doctrines articulate; he gave weight to their thought and fuel to their conviction. Thus they became known at first broadly and then particularly as Mennonites. A price was put upon Menno's head by the civil and religious authorities and a written description of his clothing and personal appearance was posted on the doors of all the churches. He was unpopular, even with the reformers, whose principles his own ministry logically carried out. Martin Luther refers to him as a "hedge-preacher, and one of those sneaking fellows who associate themselves with labourers in the harvest fields, or charcoal burners in the woods."

Among the ancient Anabaptists, whose teachings the Mennonites perpetuate today, there were as many curious cults as there are in America right now. For example, there were the Apostolic, who travelled without staff or shoes and carried no money. They preached from housetops and acted like children, accepting literally the Bible adage, "Except you become as a little child, ye shall in no wise enter the Kingdom of Heaven." These were com-

munistic. Then there were the Holy, Sinless Baptists, who surrendered belief in the Fall of Man and believed that they themselves could commit no sin. They omitted from the Lord's Prayer the line, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." There were the Silent Brethren, who, when asked about their faith, merely kept silent. There were also the Enthusiasts, and it was of their number that the worst excesses were committed. In 1536, six men and women ran naked through the streets of Amsterdam, fell into a trance and warned the citizenry of the wrath to come. The Free Brethren had their property and their women in common. They, too, were apostolic, believing as the modern Dukhobors do that Christ wanted his followers to have liberty of life and happiness.[2]

It was into this howling mass that the Priest Menno Simons fell when he leaped from the Church of Rome. And it was out of this motley host that the Mennonites of today emerged. And though migrations have gone into Russia and into Canada, the majority of these Sixteenth century zealots have settled in the United States, where, whatever may be said of their peculiar customs, they are known to be honest, industrious and prosperous. Like the Shakers and the Quakers, the Mennonites are, I believe, universally respected as citizens, and it is difficult to write intimately of their life without growing sentimental in appreciation of their kindness of heart and hospitality.

A number of the beliefs and practises that the early Mennonites instituted in Switzerland and Holland have carried over bodily in America, and though each of the interesting divisions which I shall discuss presently embodies and lends emphasis to a particular trait, it should be noted here that these early worshippers had qualities which set them sharply apart in their own day. They regarded themselves as strangers on earth; they refused to believe that the Holy Ghost was a person; they held than any wedding performed outside of the community was worldly and invalid; they combined the rite of foot-

[2] C. Henry Smith, *The Mennonites in America,* (Goshen, 1909), pp. 44, 45.

washing with the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and they set up the ban of excommunication: when a man sinned he was excommunicated from the body and the brothers and sisters were not permitted to have any sort of intercourse with him. The preachers were elected by a majority vote and were not ordained; neither did they wear any distinctive garb, for they do not constitute a profession and demand no authority.

It is probable that the first Mennonites came to these shores as early as 1650, though the first permanent settlement was made in Pennsylvania in 1683. The first who came, before this permanent establishment, were the Dutch, who came to New Amsterdam. When the English arrived in Gotham, Heatwole says that these Mennonites went over to Long Island, and that they settled with the Quakers somewhere near Gravesend Bay. Those thirteen families who established the settlement in Pennsylvania purchased eight thousand acres of land, where they laid the basis for what is now Germantown. These comprise the Mother Church of which I have been previously speaking. By the large immigration of 1820 the number in Pennsylvania was greatly augmented and is now, so far as the Mother Church is concerned, predominantly Swiss. Or at least Heatwole says that the majority of American Mennonites are of Swiss origin.

Despite the inroads of modernism, the main body of Mennonites in America still retain many of these customs. This branch believes in the "Washing (literally with hands) of the Saint's feet," and it declared in a statement of Christian Fundamentals, prepared at the Conference at Garden City, Missouri, that "footwashing as an ordinance should literally be observed by all believers." For the purpose of promoting the cause of Scriptural attire, the Mennonite General Conference appointed an advisory dress committee to study the problem from various angles. This committee laboured on the momentous matter for ten years and finally issued its report, together with interesting facts and data, under the title of *Dress*. The whole tendency is toward conservatism and Apostolic rule and plainness. In Lancaster

County, Pennsylvania, Smith points out that the term "turning plain" means joining the Mennonite Church. It should be further noted that Christian women praying or prophesying in this branch of the Church should have their heads covered, that "the salutation of the holy kiss should be appropriately observed by all believers," that the Sacrament of annointing the sick with oil should be administered to all who call for it in faith, and that "life insurance is inconsistent with the filial trust in the providence and care of our Heavenly Father."

Within the main body the attitude toward war has always given weight and distinction to the Mennonites. Not believing in "carnal warfare," they refused to take any part in the Civil War. Some of the brethren refused to fight or perform any labour remotely connected with the work of the war. Those who were conscripted often refused to draw a gun on the enemy, and the outraged officers had to put them on K. P. duty if they expected to get any service out of them. Some of these deserted and headed West, were overtaken by Southern soldiers and placed in the Libby prison at Richmond. The brethren back home offered the confederacy five hundred dollars for their release, and it was accomplished. They never made good soldiers, and never will. During the World War they refused to fight, to buy thrift stamps or Liberty Bonds, or to be conscripted into any service which had the advancement of the Allied cause as its object. The result was that in many sections of this illustrious commonwealth they were tarred and feathered and their houses painted yellow—the two standard American ways of expressing distaste. Assembled in the Yellow Creek Mennonite Church at Yellow Creek, Indiana, on the eve of America's entry into the War, they sounded their displeasure with the whole war system in terms and sincerity which make the mealy utterances of Fosdick read like a pamphlet of the National Security League. Some of their sons were confined to Leavenworth.

So it is clear, then, that while the Mennonites may show signs of turning Methodist they still have, even among the most progressive elements, features which

mark them off from their colourless brethren in the Lord. They are always seclusive, as Smith points out, because they have always been so persecuted that they felt few of the world's rights were theirs. "Nowhere else in America," he declares, "can one get so close to the spirit and customs of the common people of Switzerland and Germany of three hundred years ago as among the Amish Mennonites and some of the Mennonites of Pennsylvania." They are always the last to lay the old aside and they are intensely suspicious that everything new is worldly.

This is true not so much of the Mennonite Church in America (the main body) but of the many sects which, convinced that the parent Church was becoming careless and fleshly, have stemmed from it and formed branches of their own. A diagram of the one hundred and twenty-odd different groups among the Mennonites of America shows a division almost constantly in the direction of conservatism. This is not a singularly Mennonite phenomenon, I grant. There are some seventeen divisions of Methodism, including the Free Methodists, the Independent Methodists, the Zion Union Apostolic Church, and the Primitive Methodists who believe that the regular followers of Wesley have gone off after the world, the flesh, and the devil. The same thing may be said for the Baptists, one group of which is appropriately called the Hardshells. But growth by splitting has not been as enormous among Methodists and Baptists as it has among the Mennonites.[3]

Jacob Amman was one of the first backward reformers among the Mennonites. He visited the Swiss Church in 1693 and was astounded at the worldly practises which had crept in. For example, footwashing had been abandoned and the Saints were growing careless in the matter of shunning those who had been excommunicated from the community. Amman insisted upon the restoration of old practices and prescribed that those who had been expelled should be denied all intercourse, that even husband

[3] For a list of the main sects among the Mennonites, see the "Brief Dictionary of Sects" in the Appendix.

and wife should not be allowed to eat together after one one of them had been turned out for sin.

It was Jacob Amman, too, who instituted the custom of wearing hooks instead of buttons. It will be recalled that buttons in that day were made entirely of bones, and bones came from animals, and the true Mennonites, like the Dukhobors, believed in using nothing from animals which they could do without. Hence metal devices for fastening on the trousers and coat were deemed sufficient. Smith also indicates that hooks were a relic of an older day when buttons were unknown, and that Amman was bent upon being apostolic in a forthright and uncompromising way.

Amman was opposed in his reform campaign by Hans Reist, and the antagonism between the two was developed to such an extent that they refused to ride down the Rhine on the same boat during the exodus from Switzerland in 1711. The Amish Mennonites, who are known popularly as the Hookers, or Hook-and-Eye Mennonites came first to America in 1727 and continued to come until 1757. They were a migratory and venturesome people, settling first in the East then moving to the west and southwest. They set themselves up in Indiana in 1840 and in Iowa during the same year. They were in Kansas in the early eighties and have by now moved as far into the southwest as Oklahoma, where there are several prosperous settlements. Their principal centres, however, remain in Lancaster and Mifflin counties, Pennsylvania.

The Old Order of the Amish still maintains rigorously the customs imported from Switzerland. They have no conferences and each community is independent. They never believed in meeting houses or formal church buildings. Indeed all such edifices were looked upon by the entire Mennonite movement as worldly up until 1850. With the Amish they are still unnecessary. They meet about from farm to farm, generally every two weeks, and worship in the kitchen or the largest room in the house. They use the language of their ancestors. They are opposed to Sunday Schools and revival meetings and to meetings in the evening. They regard curtains, pictures,

and carpets as signs of pride unbecoming to a true Christian. Among the new devices still under the ban are store-bought suspenders, telephones, musical instruments, top buggies, bicycles, furnaces and hymn books which have notes in them. They all sing the melody of the hymn at their services, for the use of notes with hymns was regarded as savouring of pride and was for that reason prohibited, and to sing any more than one part of the four parts set down with notes was considered a work of the devil.[4] Their whole feeling was that to be worldly meant to be like the people whom they saw around them, and with high spiritual convictions they preserved and cultivated their peculiarities. Hooks and eyes are worn on their vests and breeches. Their clothes are made of a prescribed material and divinely ordained pattern. Every young man is required as soon as he is able to grow a beard; the hair is long and cut according to the prescribed rule of the community. Preachers, being elected and not appointed, are plentiful among them. At one time in Illinois in the Patridge Community alone, there were thirteen preachers, four of whom were bishops.

But there is great diversity even among the Amish. The churches to be found in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania, illustrate this diversity. Smith tells us that there are five varieties of Amish within the valley. These range all the way from the very conservative, known locally as the "Nebraskas," whose women still wear the old Shaker hat and avoid bonnets like the plague and whose men are not permitted to adorn themselves with suspenders, to those Amish who worship in regular meetin' houses, maintain Sunday Schools and have discarded most of the restrictions, with the exception of the bonnet. Two steps above the Nebraskas are the "Peacheyites," who may wear a single suspender, provided it is home-made. Next above these stands the group whose men-folk are permitted to hold up their trousers with manufactured suspenders but are allowed few of the other sinful pleasures of life.[5]

[4] Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 242.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 242.

The New Amish or Apostolic Church is by far the most rigid of the lot. It originated with Sam Frolich in Switzerland in 1832 and in 1846–1847 a number of the New Amish migrated to Ohio. By 1909 there were several thousand there. They are remarkably exclusive, obeying literally the Biblical injunction, "Salute no man by the way." Since 1911 they have had headquarters in Central Illinois. They will not listen, nor do the bishops allow any members of the communion to listen, to preaching or praying or any form of religious exercise unless it is performed by a minister of their own faith. For this reason they never attend weddings or funeral services of relatives or friends if these relatives or friends are not members of their own body. They enforce the ban in a manner which would have delighted Jacob Amman half to death, for they allow husband and wife no privileges once the ban has been pronounced against them. They cannot eat at the same table nor sleep in the same bed. This enforcement has worked havoc, so Smith tells us, with a number of families. There were several cases, notably that of Sam Moser, where the excommunicated saint was ultimately driven into an insane rage and murdered the family which refused to have aught to do with him.

Another conservative group gathered about a man named Wisler in 1871. Wisler set his face staunchly against four-part singing. But there was a young smart-aleck in his congregation who set his face with equal determination to introduce newer methods. He went about performing such heresies as preaching in English, and Wisler in desperation forbade the young man, named Daniel Brenemen, to introduce anything else new into worship on pain of excommunication. Brenemen was tried in 1870, and at the trial Wisler conducted himself so shamefully that he was deprived of his ministerial connexion. He forthwith formed his own denomination and it was strengthened in 1886 by the addition of a number of conservatives from a settlement at Woolwich, Ontario, who withdrew from the main body there on the ground that it tolerated English preaching, Sunday Schools, eve-

ning meetings, and falling-top buggies among its members.

What little literature that is to be found on these vagrant Mennonite bodies is the product of hard toil and conjecture. They are of course the most intriguing of the lot, but the sad fact remains that they keep no record of their doings. A few years back the regular Mennonites started out to collect information on the status and polity of the multifarious sects. At once they confronted this impediment: The Mennonites of many bodies raised no stones to their dead and kept no archives. While their present status is hard to determine, every indication points to a continuation among them of that same hard, uncompromising conservatism that has always marked them off. They owe nothing to the world, and while they are invariably hospitable and beneficent in their dealings with those they have to meet, they keep rigidly to themselves and let the world puzzle about them as it pleases.

XX

ATHEISM

I

ATHEISM is by several howls the most fervent and evangelical cult in the United States today. President Charles Smith and the shrill Mr. Hopgood, his inimitable secretary, will doubtless sue me for libel when I put them in the same class with Pastor Russell, Mother Eddy, Annie Besant, Swedenborg, and Frank N. D. Buchman, but that is precisely where they belong. They have, by the adroit use of propaganda and reverberating phrases built up in the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism an organization that rivals any sect, both in the fervour of its appeal and the religiosity of its program and tactics. I am inclined to think that the student of religious abnormality in our times could safely overlook all the others and confine himself to the zealous words and deeds of the "4A,"as it is lovingly called in its pamphlets; for we have here the most clear-cut example of how a religion gets formed, what it does, and how it operates. The movement parallels in every detail the growth of other sects, and it has the advantage of being sufficiently exaggerated and egregious to offer materials for a rare case study in pathology.

The 4A movement is not the first to make a cult of Atheism. Charles Bradlaugh did it in the middle of the Nineteenth Century, and did it well. He did it by his excellent speaking voice, his power of painting word pictures, his captivating appearance and personality, his ability to dramatize the devil and rally the hosts of wickedness into a Cause. He shook London from centre to circumference by his masterful addresses. He made

Atheism oratorical and consequently oracular. Together with Annie Besant, who later deserted the fold of materialism for the rapturous cult of Madame Blavatsky, he launched and came near consummating a program of social reform which could have brought in the atheistic Kingdom of God. He was a man of charm, of sincerity, and of conviction—what more is needed in a prophet? He believed as heartily in the absence of God as the eminent Doctor Straton believes in his existence. His belief in non-existence amounted to a faith, and his behaviour, psychologically, was every whit as religious as Straton's.

Nor must we forget the labours of our own Robert Green Ingersoll. He made Atheism a faith, but he was either not shrewd enough or too discreet to organize his forces after him. He was but a voice crying in the wilderness, so that what work he performed now lingers chiefly in the form of personal influence and lectures read on the sly by young men in theological seminaries. He is cherished among the present zealots as a saint and as a symbol. He laid the basis for the sect of non-believers.

There have been other offorts, but none as successful or naked as that of Charles Smith of Arkansas, who in 1925, after some opposition from the bench, secured a charter for the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. The time, of course, was ripe. Discontent had stirred the land. All of our emotions were intensified by the War, with the result that those inclined toward conventional religious ideas hastened off to the excesses of the nightgown boys or grouped themselves into Fundamentalist classes and declared war to the finish upon the unbelievers both in and out of the Church. Everybody saw red. Fundamentalism could never have descended with such fury upon us if it had not been for the War and its premature termination. It was essentially —and this same obvious fact applies to the Klan—an emotional movement expressing itself in abnormal religious activity.

In short, religion became more egregious than it had ever been before in this generation. Methodists, Baptists,

Presbyterians, Campbellites and all were given to excesses and to extravagant utterance and action. Such a teeming hullabaloo was sure to bring a reaction—and of the very sort that the hullabaloo had modelled. Atheism was as inevitable as either the French or the Russian Revolutions. The world was prepared emotionally for the clarion call which it sounded—and it seems to me no evidence of its organizing power that more than one hundred thousand of our citizens flocked to the banners within a year after the Association was formed. Christian Science rose to power because the orthodox Churches were decadent and moribund. Atheism started with a whoop because the Churches were ridiculous and hysterical.

II

The first request for a charter was made in October, 1925. This request was promptly refused by the august and outraged judge to whom application was presented. The application was promptly put in again and just as promptly it was turned down once more. Finally in November of the same year, however, the charter was granted, and there came into being the first organization outside of Russia for the aggressive promulgation of Atheism. It began at once to call itself a "Militant Foe of the Church and Clergy," and at once set in motion its messianic machinery. President Smith announced that "We are going to undermine the Churches of America as certainly as time." The organization at once resorted to high-pressure evangelistic tactics, knowing full well that it is by organization and engineering that anything from soup to religion is put across to-day; and a year and a half later Secretary Hopgood announced, that, "We have found putting over Atheism in the United States much easier than we anticipated." [1] Within eighteen months the Association had established chapters in twenty colleges—the first being established at the good Baptist University of Rochester—and had gotten its message to one ship in the United States Navy. What is more,

[1] Second Annual Report of the Association, Issued February, 1928.

the movement had already reached to the back places, for chapters were to be found in the University of Texas, the University of Kentucky, and the University of Kansas. All of which goes to show how happy the hour was for the opening of the campaign of the new religion. A paper, called *The Truth Seeker* had been founded for propaganda purposes, and its tirades upon spirituality had grown as high-pitched as the attacks of the *Texas Christian Advocate* on Burton Roscoe and Mr. Mencken. The Ingersoll Forum had been established, and was soon to become the Mother Forum for others in various cities where Atheism managed to get a toe-hold. The seat of this Forum in New York was soon moved to a hall immediately across the street from the Calvary Baptist Church of the ineffable Doctor Straton, and though President Smith denied that the location of the Forum there was due to any animus, he did go on to say, "If Straton doesn't like it, I guess he can move."

Smith and Hopgood form the team that put Atheism across. Smith is the silent power of the movement, and Hopgood is the orator. Smith came from Arkansas and Oklahoma. He had one year in Harvard and has practised as a lawyer. He became an Atheist through the reading of Thomas Jefferson's Bible. Hopgood, whose appearance greatly resembles that of an earnest young Epworth League worker, is oratorical and argumentative. His later pictures show the wrinkles between the eyes which grave concern for the Cause have wrought there. He is clever, a maker of captivating phrases, and as fearless as the Apostle Paul. He employs the same rhetorical devices and the same thundering eloquence as Colonel William Joseph Simmons used on the gathering of the Klan. He calls the Bible a cesspool of Asiatic superstition, says that in three hundred years there won't be a church in America, and is hell-bent to rid the land of the Big-Man-up-in-the-Sky stuff. He hopes also to open the skulls of the younger generation, let out Catholic superstition and Christian bunk, and insert logic and truth.

On New Year's day, 1927, the first foreign missionary

of Atheism set sail from America. Here again the tendency to adopt the methods and purposes of the existing religions is obvious. On that date Mr. Edwin Bergstrom, who had organized a branch in British Columbia, left New York to spread the good news in Sweden. The annual report of the Association says that a delegation was at the pier to see him off, and that "Near by a group of Christians waved farewell to a missionary of their own."

Atheism has its Fundamentals and it makes no bones about it. The Atheists have set out to combat the Fundamentalists and the ridiculous God idea. They have taken their cue from their enemy. At any rate, here follow the Five Fundamentals of Atheism:

(1) Materialism.—The doctrine that Matter, with its indwelling property, Force, constitutes the reality of the Universe.

(2) Sensationalism.—The doctrine that all ideas arise out of sensation and that, therefore, man can have no conception of an infinite God, or of ultimate causation, or of that absolute moral imperative which certain philosophers have made the foundation of Theism.

(3) Evolution.—The doctrine that organisms are not designed, but have evolved, mechanically, through Natural Selection.

(4) The existence of evil.—The patent fact that renders irrational the belief in a beneficent, omnipotent being who cares for man.

(5) Hedonism.—The doctrine that happiness here and now should be the motive of conduct.

Can anyone read these windy Fundamentals and longer doubt that Atheism is a religion?

It is as though the apostles of the 4A had gone carefully through the catalogue of theology and set down the opposite of every conventional doctrine. And what is the result but a new theology and a new series of canons, all of them to be rigidly enforced? Anyone who is acquainted with even the rudiments of psychology knows that to deny the generally accepted God gives one just as great a psychic kick as to affirm Him, and that it brings to the individual just as great a sense of cosmic importance. Solemn denial of God is a religious act. Atheism affirms the high importance of man in the manner of, say, the Vedanta philosophy, by exalting him above the standard idea of God. In its credo God is pictured as

a harmful delusion and consequently as a devil; man is regarded as an enchanted wretch who is to be freed of the God-idea and raised to a state of lofty character.

So it is that when Atheism erects a literature and preaches a gospel on the non-existence of God, it occupies precisely the same place in the social scheme of the Twentieth Century that Christianity occupied in the first. It presents an outlawed religious idea; and to maintain a position of outlawry some purposive conviction and action are needed. The opposition is launched, not essentially against God as a being but against the idea of God. The 4A, then, offers man a new idea of God—one that comes into conflict with prevailing theologies and demands a martyr. The martyr is forthcoming, not only because he believes in the new idea but because he realizes emotionally that devotion to the idea pits him against society; once this realization is in his mind he will not surrender his belief, for it becomes the instrument of his importance, his individuality and singularity.

Then, too, there is a highblown social program, in addition to the Fundamentals of the Atheists. There are certain definite reforms which, if accomplished, will usher in the atheistic millennium. These include such sweeping and senseless proposals as the removal of "In God We Trust" from coins. Their opposition to the emblems of the enemy is ridiculous and quite as asinine as the objection on the part of Methodist bishops to the very existence of the atheistic organization. Their campaign literature carries the slogan: "Fight With the 4A. Kill the Beast!" The Christ becomes the anti-Christ and the whole scheme of the sect becomes an exact reproduction of the early sect which at Antioch was first called Christian. If one should go through the propaganda of Atheism and change here and there the word Atheist to Baptist, the result would not be noticeably different. The verbs, the rhetoric, the zeal, the cosmic insolence, the hatred—all could be left untouched and would fit as well into the scheme of the Christian Fundamentalists as it does into the almanac of Atheism. There is no essential difference between Atheism as it is now con-

ducted and Fundamtntalism as it has been conducted since the War.

Both the Messianic scheme of the Association and the childish tactics to which it resorts in names and organizations are strangely reminiscent of the more conventional forms of religion. In a letter addressed to patrons and prospects under date of February 7, 1928, Brother Freeman Hopgood writes with the zeal of a recently converted layman, as follows:

> Religion is dying, but so slowly that it may linger a thousand years, blighting the life of man, unless organized, relentless war is waged against it on a vast scale. You are invited to become a soldier in the army for the liberation of humanity. Can you not enlist others under the 4A banner? Together let's kill the Beast!

Take away the ideas and catchphrases for which Brother Hopgood is indebted to religionists, and what is left? Religion as interpreted here is sin, a sort of cosmic blight and curse which must be eradicated from the earth. "Relentless war" and "organized war" must be "waged against it"—and not only so, but on a "vast scale." A soldier in the army for the liberation of humanity! Where is an evangelical religion which did not pull that wheeze? "The 4A banner" as a phrase emblazons evangelistic balderdash and smells to high heaven of the methods which the archfiend of Atheism, William A. Sunday, has used every since the day he deserted the professional baseball for the sawdust trail. "Together let's kill the Beast!" What is the Beast but a religion symbol? the emblem of wickedness and sin and suffering and oppressions and all the other horrors both local and cosmic to which every militant religion has addressed itself?

Take further the pathetic claims which the Atheists make of illustrious personages. If Aristotle were alive today, says President Smith, he would be a member of the Association. The same is true of Abe Lincoln. As it is there is Clement Wood, Sinclair Lewis, E. Haldeman-Julius, Rupert Hughes, and George A. Dorsey. We must not forget Jim Tully, the President reminds us, nor that Mencken would be one if he did not object to labels. So

it goes. Just as the village pastor got a profound thrill when the late Judge Gary said the Bible must stand or civilization will perish, and just as he claims the judge and every other celebrity he can fasten his Christian hooks upon, so does the Association prowl through the catalogue of eminence and find those names which it can use to bolster up its cause.

And suppose we look at the names which the various branches over the country have given themselves. Is there a vast difference between the "Busy Bees" of The Presbyterian Sunday School at Kaufman, Texas, and the "Devil's Angels" of Los Angeles? Both are childish affectatious and both are mildly funny. "The Society of the Godless" in New York and the "Sons of Satan" in Oklahoma City (later changed to the "Truth Seekers") are both names which have the yowl of adolescence about them. They are poses, they are emblematic, and they are unspeakably silly. None but a religious body could think of such names. When a Sunday School class calls itself the "Willing Workers," it accepts a banner, a religious ideal, and it intends to fit itself into a tradition. When the college students of the University of Rochester call themselves the "Damned Souls," they are being just as emblematic and religious. In Philadelphia are "God's Black Sheep," and out in the University of North Dakota is the "Legion of the Damned," whose high mogul calls himself "His Satanic Majesty."

The time for self-conscious blasphemy is, of course, most opportune. The profanation and desecration of the temple has become a sanctimonious process to be religiously performed. The whole truth of Atheism is that it is frightfully religious-conscious. It is much too aware of religion to be genuinely atheistic. I doubt not that there have been and are many Atheists upon the earth. They are for the most part silent fellows who have forgotten that religion exists and they learn of it ever and anon with a start. But they do not form the back bone of the Cause. The ranks of Atheism are recruited from young fellows who are just out of their hippins. They have not yet learned to live without a purpose. This, I assert,

is borne out of the fact that nine tenths of the young folks within the ranks were formerly Epworth League workers in days just around the corner. I cite the case of Miss Christine Walker of Gap, Pennsylvania, who now supervises the work of the Junior Atheist League. She might as well be working on the Junior Epworth League for all it amounts to her personally, for before her desertion she was a staunch and dependable worker in the Christian Endeavor Society of Gap. Those who have given up the standard religion of their youth and are not strong enough to stand alone and idle, gravitate toward the ranks of the Atheists. The raw material as well as the rhetoric of the present day movement is drawn from violent Christianity. Atheists today are for the most part congenital religionists. When an infidel talks incessantly of religion, I become suspicious of his infidelity. The Atheists make a big point of the fact that there are thousands upon thousands of men in America who are privately Atheists but will not join the Cause. They are, I suspect, entirely correct in their estimate. But the point is not favourable to Atheism. They will never recruit from those who are privately Atheists. When a man has learned to keep his religion to himself, he is much too civilized to join the strident chorus of a bunch of puerile "damned souls" who want to take "In God We Trust" off the coins of our Great Republic. The true Atheist, if he were worth his salt, would not give a tinker's dam about the liberation of humanity. Nor would it make the slightest difference to him whether the beast of religion were ever killed or not. In the summary which it gives of the first year's work, the Association reports that "We are instrumental in defeating the vicious attempt of the religionists of New York to have the Ten Commandments read in the public schools." Would any really irreligious man care whether they are read or not? Only those who have joined the Cause can see the horror of religious practices. There is a vast gulf between the irreligious and the Atheistic. The Atheists, it seems to me, do not quite understand the

disparity between the two. Those who like to fight under banners, who love to make and use catch phrases, and would join in the army for the liberation of humanity —these make up the core of Evangelical Atheism.

III

It need hardly be said that Atheism has been given what it needed to make it flourish as a cult, namely, persecution. Salvatore Russo, head of the Society of Damned Souls at Rochester when it was organized in 1926, was taken out and beaten with a coal shovel by his fellow students, then left alone on a country road with no choice but to walk home after the beating. His father is a spaghetti manufacturer, and the old gentleman's business has suffered lamentably since the son became a theological leper in his own community. Like most of the others, Salvatore was an ardent religionist in his earlier youth. Now he has more than fifty of the Haldeman-Julius Blue Books in his library, probably picked up at a bargain when the Kansas publisher made his final offer in 1903. He is as popular on the campus as a Christian Science healer would be in Rochester, Minnesota.

During the early part of 1927 President Smith toured the Southwest, which in the judgment of the Association is the citadel of the Devil. Its forces are to be concentrated upon that backward territory with the hope that it may be evangelized before it is too late. In Dallas, a stronghold of Methodist culture, a young man became so enraged at President Smith's evangelical faith in the nonexistence of God that he challenged the silken Arkansawyer to fight the whole question out with pistols. If Smith had been killed, it would have demonstrated conclusively, I suppose, that there is a God after all. The hill-billies of Hunter, Arkansas, mobbed Our Leader, showering him with stones and eggs. He barely escaped with his life, and once again the whole question of Atheism versus Theism came near being settled in the good old American way.

At Little Rock Our Leader sought to prevail upon the

Legislature of his native state to abrogate those fatuous regulations which forbid Atheists' holding office in that commonwealth. While loafing about the State capitol, he saw several representatives gather about the Speaker's rostrum and to his amazement heard them singing, "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder, I'll Be There." It is as though Bishop Manning should one day find a group of Columbia students gathered in the nave of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine singing the ditty about the widow and the barber's son. Our Leader was properly outraged at the sacrilege and abomination of the temple of state and he exclaimed, ere he could check himself, "What a disgrace to the state!" The report got out that the Atheist had said just those words, with the double result that the Arkansas Legislature passed a resolution declaring that the Constitution affirms the existence of God and a lay Methodist preacher threatened to beat up Our Leader unless he left town by the next express.

At Huntington, West Virginia, the clergy became hysterical when they learned that the Atheist was to discuss the merits of religion within the township. They prevailed upon the Mayor to cancel the contract for the use of the town hall. Then the state armory was engaged, but the clergy again prevailed—this time upon the Adjutant General of the state—and this contract was cancelled. A private hall was rented, and it seemed that the stage would be set. But two hours before the hour announced, the clergyman, the Mayor, and one of the "Key men of America" warned the hall owner that he would be ruined financially, so the whole program was called off at the last moment. In Boston, which the Association reports is "culturally as low as Arkansas itself," practically the same unhappy result followed the attempt to engage in debate there.

Other incidents of persecution are to be found, for the Association, like all good and shrewd religious bodies, lists, catalogues and advertises them. It is said that, at the request of Rev. Dr. Daniel A. Poling of New York, a house cleaning employee was dismissed from the services of his company for speaking of Atheism in the

sacred walls of the Marble Collegiate Church. Another Atheist is reported to have been dismissed as fireman of the furnace at Drew Theological Seminary, and later beaten, for distributing the literature of the cult on the campus. Arthur L. Evans, now of Cleveland, is said to have been set upon and severely pummeled by several in a place which the Association does not name. Jack Bryan, an organizer for the Association, was threatened with tar and feathers in Ravenna, Ohio.

Of course John Roach Straton has done his bit toward making the Atheists popular among every liberal-minded person from coast to coast. He instituted suit against President Smith upon the preposterous charge of annoyance by mail. It all seems to have grown out of the fracas over little Uldine Utley. It was President Smith who started action looking to the suppression of little Uldine on the ground that she was a minor being exploited by Brother Straton. The action got nowhere because the child was not gainfully employed, and since she relied entirely upon free will offerings for her support, the state had no right to interfere.

At the height of Uldine's revival, President Smith sent Straton a challenge to engage in a debate with Clement Wood at the Ingersoll Open Forum across the street. Straton accepted on the condition that officers of the Association attend his church. This they did, but on the appointed day for the debate with Wood, who in the light of his recent *Outline of Man's Knowledge* would doubtless have disemboweled the pastor, Doctor Straton was out of the city.

The failure to get together threw the weight of the controversy upon correspondence. During the correspondence, the Association says, "President Smith endeavored to enlighten Doctor Straton, even entertaining hope of converting him from Christianity to Atheism, by mailing him four pieces of propaganda literature."

Six months later, while President Smith was "in darkest Arkansas," the pastor filed suit against the official of the Atheists for annoyance by mail. An able counsel was engaged and for the next six months the case was argued

off and on before Magistrate Gottlieb. The Magistrate, a Jew, heard the case patiently, but with a curious American twist to his thinking took offence at certain humorous references which were made to the Virgin Mary during the course of the trial, and upon the basis of these references, the Association charges, President Smith was held for trial in Special Sessions Court. A few days later the defendant sued out a writ of habeas corpus before Justice Thomas C. T. Crain of the Supreme Court, who upheld the writ and ordered the defendant discharged. But Straton and the District Attorney's office appealed the case.

In commenting upon the action of the clergyman and the first decisions of the Court, the Association says:

> Not Mr. Smith, but Atheism is on trial. The success of the Association, not the mailing of four pieces of literature, spurred the fanatics to action. Dr. Straton is out to crush the 4A. This he will never do, for "there is more solidarity among Atheists, and there are more Atheists than he suspects."

Mr. Smith was later found guilty and fined one hundred dollars. There will follow, no doubt, a number of appeals.

IV

The every-day activities of the Association are as puerile and frantic as the names of its branch societies. During 1927 Secretary Hopgood telegraphed President Coolidge, asking him to forgo the customary Thanksgiving Proclamation. The President, curiously enough, refused. When Coolidge declared that "the Bible is the foundation of good government," the Association sent him a telegram "giving evidence that it is a most un-American book." Billy Sunday is hounded about the country by blood-thirsty pamphlets, and when last summer he went to speak in Ocean Grove, New Jersey, he received a letter saying that leaflets and letters attacking him would be distributed during the campaign. The Association viewed his appearance as "a calamity" and

warned him to retire. In Portland, Oregon, when "the ministerial alliance announced its nefarious campaign to disrupt the public schools once a week, we warned that if they proceeded, we would distribute immense quantities of literature exposing the Bible." Vigorous protest has been lodged with Postmaster General New against the use of the walls of post offices by Christian evangelists for poster advertising. Christine Walker, of Gap, Pennsylvania, sent Uldine Utley a challenge to debate the question, "Is The Bible A Safe Moral Guide?" and Freeman Hopgood threw down the gauntlet to Irving T. Bush, the question which he proposed to decide by debate being, "Is There A God?" When Mrs. Lillian Knudsen of York, Pennsylvania, was prosecuted last summer for blasphemy, the Association telegraphed an offer of legal support.

By a clever and altogether admirable system of organization the Association has begun to get its messianic program under weigh. "Birth control," says the Association, "is practical Atheism. It substitutes the providence of man for the providence of God by taking thought of tomorrow. The so-called Word of God says 'It is good not to touch a woman.' Birth control says it is good to touch a woman. The Bible lies." During 1928 it founded the American Anti-Bible Society under the leadership of Tennessee's Grand Old Man, William S. Bryan. The purpose and fervent hope of this branch of the Association is "to make a laughing-stock of the Christian fetish book, causing people to smile wherever it is named." The "first engagement with the enemy" occurred when the Chicago secretary of the Gideons warned Mr. Bryan and his followers "against stealing Bibles out of guest rooms in hotels." The Society proposes to circularize hotel owners and commercial travelling men with a leaflet pointing out the "more objectionable Bible teachings."

Proper use has been made of the "revolt of modern youth." This revolt makes the progress of Atheism all the easier. Systematic agitation goes on among students from kindergarden to graduate school and results have been most encouraging. A branch has recently been

organized in California which calls itself "The Hedonic Host of Hell-bent Heathens." This branch had, at last reporting, thirty-five members and "with systematic proselyting hopes to have one hundred by the end of the school year. The leader is an enthusiastic young genius, until recently very active in the church."

A seminary for the proper study of the cardinal doctrines has been formed by the Association in New York. Young men and women and boys and girls are trained in public speaking, for it is oratory that Atheism proposes to convert the world from God. The beginning is modest, but is hoped that it will some day culminate in the existence of a seminary of Atheism in every large city.

To combat the superstition fostered by the Catholic Church in Mexico and Central America, the *Confederation Americana del Ateismo,* with headquarters in Mexico City, has recently been formed. The leader of "this gigantic undertaking to conquer a continent with Science and Reason is Nanni Leone Castelli. . . . The time is ripe to strike the death-blow to religion and in South America openly to attack the clergy."

So the Cause advances merrily. Apart from the obstacle of women, whom the Atheists regard as their greatest foe, there is nothing that promises to stem the tide. It seeks to establish branches in every community of importance, and to conduct silent, individual propaganda where no flag is hoisted. It has opened a fund to prove that man and the ape are kin by an experiment in hybridization, and as soon as others have contributed to the fund as generously as has one George T. Smith and the proper candidates can be led to consent, man and ape will breed to the consternation of the clergy. A headquarters fund has been launched and a building with club rooms and library will be erected as soon as the damned souls of the Republic can be persuaded to pay fifty thousand dollars for the liberation of humanity. An ecumenical conference will be staged just as soon as there are enough affiliated groups to swing it, and the prospectus of the World Union of Atheists is already in

type awaiting release. An appeal has been issued to those in all lands "who desire to rid the world of religion," and a superb response is anticipated, for, say the Atheists, their camp is not divided by bickering over various Christs and revelations and gods. Yet I, for one, dare to doubt it. Within two years I predict that there will be the True American Association, the Liberal 4A, and a probable Primitive 4A, with a follow-up by the New Reform A. A. A. A. and the Authentic Apostolic American Association for the advancement of Atheism. The appeal of the present Association is issued exclusively to he-men and aggressive women, to adventurers who will breast the storm of opposition for the new faith and martyr themselves if need be in the arena of the holy American Empire. "It neither apologizes to nor compromises with the enemy." It avows:

> Religion deserves no respect. It rests on the God-lie. We now know, as well as we know anything, that there is no God. The time for doubt and dodging is past. There is no excuse for calling oneself a Modernist, Unitarian, Rationalist, Freethinker, or Agnostic. Atheist is the honest and honourable title.

The effort is made to enlist all classes of doubters and seekers under the one honest and honourable title. Pussyfooters are not allowed. There are those who respect and adore the works of Paine, Ingersoll and Voltaire, yet like the indifferent Christians, will not turn a hand in the Cause of the saints. These are not wanted; such " 'respectables' don't belong in the 4A. They should join a church," says Hopgood. Only these who will stand loyal in the face of steady fire and hold aloft the flag of godlessness are desired. Particularly is the challenge issued to youth, for youth, weary of the orthodox churches' indifference and utter lack of crusading spirit, is ready to volunteer at once for the fight on behalf of Atheism. A pimpled youth may withstand the onslaughts of Billy Sunday or Sherwood Eddy; but how can any red-blooded young American resist this appeal?

> Religion must go. It poisons life. If you would free mankind of its frightful curse, fight with the 4A.

If there exists a young man who would not fight to free humanity from a frightful curse he is a lousy pacifist. Youth has responded to such an appeal in every age; certainly it cannot stand, fiddling and indifferent in this hour of monstrous crisis.

The Atheists should be grateful that mankind is incurably, explosively, religious; if it were not so, the present method and appeal of its propaganda would be as weak and futile as unexaggerated advertising.

V

I have exhibited the Fundamentals, the Saints, the appeal, of Atheism. I have shown that their passion is for martyrdom, their hope for the millennium. That they have their devil is obvious, and it seems tedious to mention the fact again. But I cannot resist giving the words of the Atheists:

> We treat Theists as they treat us—as enemies. To the tiresome and timid noncombatants who continually chatter that more flies are caught with syrup than vinegar, we answer the best way is to swat them.

And that, I believe, is the best picture we have of current Atheism—it is a sort of national fly-swatting campaign, with unbuttoned boys and girls chasing about the land murdering gnats and insects, with orators haranguing the multitude and headquarters mailing to innocent ministers a lot of vicious literature. There is not a caper or antic in the whole side-splitting history of religion, from the days of Astarte to Pastor Russell, of which the modern Atheists are not guilty. Not by frontal attacks or insidious indoctrination will they harm religion, but by showing the world that they are religionists and that religious behavior is the same the world over, whether prompted by Baha'u'llah or by Freeman Hopgood.

Something must be said of the literature which the Association has either produced or collected. *The Holy Bible in a Nutshell* is an atrocious collection of bloody

passages from the pages of Holy Writ, circulated gratis to prospects and young converts to or from Christianity. Its representation of the Bible is quite as fair and purposive as John Roach Straton's sermons on the 4A activities. *The New Doxology* is a revised and uncopyrighted version of that famous hymn, pointing out the catastrophes which have befallen humanity since the days of the flood. *The Lost Boy* is an exposition for deluded mothers, for it "shows the folly of prayer." The books which the Association backs, apparently because it regards them as favourable to its cause, include *Elmer Gantry, The Companionate Marriage, Why we Behave Like Human Beings,* and that Gibraltar of human reason, *The Outline of Man's Knowledge* by Clement Wood. In addition to these there is now a monthly bulletin, soon to be converted into a weekly paper, and the regular monthly issue of the *Truth Seeker,* the official organ of the church. And over and beyond all of these are the diatribes which the youthful members have written under the divine afflatus of Atheism. One of the converts is Queen Silver, that prodigy of Los Angeles, who conducts her own magazine, though she is scarcely seventeen, and fills it with such blasphemy as must make heaven reverberate with the pained and angry cries of God. One verse will probably escape the editor:

> Arrogance—forgery—lies—
> Arson and rapine and fraud;
> Tyranny—terror and spies—
> This is the book of God.

I can do no better than to draw this comedy to a close with words which I suspect leaped from the pen of the fiery Mr. Hopgood. Whatever else may be said of him, I'll say that he thoroughly enjoys the drama of Atheism and that he has an imagination and power of expression which should be put to less dangerous purposes than driving a Lord from his throne. When all had been said and done for the 1928 Bulletin, Hopgood closes with these words:

The hour to overthrow the Church has come. Arise, ye prisoners of the priest! Strike down the God superstition! The Clergy are powerful because you are on your knees. Stand up! Cast aside supernatural faith and fear! Be men!

The truth is, of course, that Brother Hopgood is a mere doppelgänger of Sam Jones or the frequently disemboweled William Sunday. Change his nouns and the whigmaleeries are the same. Just as it must cause sincere Methodists a great deal of pain to see some of their bishops perform, so it must give stolid and reticent Atheists a great deal of sadness, tempered by some amusement, to see the capers of the 4A. I imagine they feel, and with good reason, that the shrill and raucous ballyhoo of the Association has turned back the progress of the cause of irreligion at least a hundred years. Every Cause must suffer from its excesses. This fact Christianity has suggested during the course of its two thousand years of existence, and organized Atheism has shown conclusively in its two.

The most concentrated and highly organized rebellion against the God-idea in the history of the race, backed by the superb methods to which American business enterprise has given rise, ended by being a new religion—God, devil, saints, shrine, oratory, millennium and all.

APPENDIX

I

A BRIEF DICTIONARY OF SECTS

ADONIA SHOMO, THE. This sect grew out of the Millerite revival through the belief of a converted Quaker, F. T. Howland, that he had become inspired. With a number of followers who believed in a spiritual dispensation to precede the millennium, an association was formed in 1861, and in 1864 it made a settlement in Petersham, Massachusetts. The sect was communistic, observed Saturday as the Sabbath, and had the Lord's Prayer as a basis of worship. It was chartered in 1876, five years after the founder's death. Control was in the hands of a lawyer whose character was questioned. Dissension followed, and dissolution occurred in 1897.

ADVENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Although its beginning was claimed as occurring in 1844, this branch really began in 1854. Its members hold that man is unconscious in death till the return of Christ. Their faith is simple and consists chiefly in a belief that Christ's return is imminent. Resurrection is considered the gift of God. The practice of immersion and the Lord's Supper forms their only ordinance. The church is evangelical, has churches in thirty-six states, and in 1916 had a membership of more than thirty-thousand which represented a healthy growth during the preceding ten years.

ADVENTISTS, EVANGELICAL. The oldest of the Millerites (*q. v.*). They believe in contradistinction to the Advent Christians, that the wicked are conscious in hell; the righteous are to arise at the beginning of the millennium and receive eternal bliss. The wicked will be called forth at the same time but consigned to everlasting torment.

ADVENTISTS, SEVENTH DAY. This church originated in 1845–1846 upon the interpretation of Daniel VIII, 13–14: "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed"—as meaning that heaven was here, since the date of 1844, set as the coming of the Kingdom, was correct. Leaders were Joseph Bates, James White, Mrs. Ellen G. White, a prophet. They worshipped according to their name and believed in immersion, unconsciousness in death, the impending personal coming of Christ. The use of alcohol or tobacco results in expulsion from the organization. In 1916 they numbered more than sixty thousand.

ADVENTISTS, OTHER GROUPS. These include the Church of God (Adventist), the Life and Advent Union, and the Churches of God in Christ Jesus. The first of these seceded in 1863 because they doubted the divine inspiration of Mrs. White. The second was formed by those who believed there was no resurrection for the wicked. The third resulted from a union of independent churches in 1888. Doctrine and theology conform in the main with the other branches.

ALTRUISTS, THE. This communistic group is located in Sulphur Springs, Missouri, and has one outstanding trait which distinguishes it from the majority of coöperative societies: No religious requirements or restrictions obtain and no interference in religion, politics, or family relations is permitted.

AMANA SOCIETY. It arose in Germany in 1714 and had a fugitive existence until 1826, when a large estate was leased in Marienborn, Hesse, and by 1835 was quite prosperous. Persecuted, Christian Metz and others came to America in 1842. After securing the Seneca Indian reservation, 800 immigrated here. They were called the Ebenezer Society and were arranged in four villages. In 1855 growth caused move to present location in Iowa County, Iowa. They were incorporated as the Amana Society in 1859. Property is held in common fund and only principal is returned upon withdrawal. There has been no prophet since 1883. They use no water baptism, observe a biennial Lord's Supper, indulge in foot-washing for the highest spiritual order only. Communistic entirely, the sect has no amusements, although the order is not ascetic. In 1916 the community had a membership of 1,534.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Rev. S. H. Droeklich, a Swiss who came to America about 1850 organized this sect. It holds the doctrine of entire sanctification. In 1916 the membership was more than four thousand.

APOSTOLIC CHURCH. Organized in 1888 in Philadelphia by Albert F. Atwood, it has branches in Virginia, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. It is based solely on the New Testament. Its reported membership in 1916 was 112.

APOSTOLIC FAITH MOVEMENT. It appeared in 1900. It is not a denomination but an evangelistic movement carried on by preachers. They visit and pray for the sick without charge. Distant ill are treated through correspondence. They send blessed handkerchiefs and similar tokens for relief. Headquarters are in Los Angeles, California, and Portland, Oregon, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. In 1916 there were 2,196, which represented a sharp loss since 1906.

ATHEISM. American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. Its charter was granted in 1925 to Charles Smith after two previous court refusals. It has chapters in twenty colleges. Smith with Freeman Hopgood leads the movement, which has met with apparent success among the younger minds. The movement is highly evangelical and militant and sends out floods of literature to every name on its mailing list. On January 1, 1927, the first foreign missionary sailed, with Sweden as his objective. Its five fundamentals are Materialism, Sensationalism, Evolution, the Existence of Evil, and Hedonism.

BAHAISM. Name of followers of Baha'u'llah, self-proclaimed divine leader of the Babis in Persia in 1853. Mohammedan in origin and linked with the Shi-ite sect of the Twelve Imams. Believed that the Bab, who manifested himself in 1848, restored communication between the last Imam and his followers. The Bab, martyred in 1850 in Tabriz, before his death, however, arranged for its continuance under the leadership of the half brother of Baha'u'llah. When Baha'u'llah announced himself as a still greater manifestation than the Bab, trouble ensued, but his followers gained control gradually and the name, Bahais, has become general. Introduced in America by Ibrahim

George Kharu'llah in the nineties and promoted later by Abdul-Baha, Baha'u'llah's successor. The great, nine-sided temple, begun in 1902 on the shores of Lake Michigan, is still unfinished. Believe all previous revelations of every religion fulfilled in that of Baha'u'llah. Humanitarian in interest. Counts more than nine million adherents throughout the world, many of them of other faiths, and has centres in some thirty American cities.

BAPTISTS, DUCK RIVER. They are chiefly located in the mountainous regions of Tennessee, Kentucky, Georgia, and Alabama. They appeared in the Elk River basin in 1808 and were brought more closely together by conflict with the Methodists. There are several kindred groups. They are liberal Calvinists and believe in immersion and foot-washing. In 1916 their rolls carried nearly seven thousand names.

BAPTISTS, FREE. Benjamin Randall was dropped by the Calvinists in 1779 and soon had adherents of his own. In 1826 the first organization took place. They have used a variety of names, the present one being adopted in 1892. In 1835 they took a stand against slavery. The sect is not a variant from the main church in doctrine. The drop in membership from more than one hundred thousand to twelve thousand was a result of union with the Baptists.

BAPTISTS, FREE WILL. This church had its origin in a Welsh church in Pennsylvania in 1703. It spread into North Carolina in 1717 under Paul Palmer. It grew healthily and received some of the Free Baptists, who rebelled at the general union. They believe in foot-washing and anointing the sick with oil. Their doctrinal basis is Arminian. In 1916 they numbered 54,000.

BAPTISTS, GENERAL. The first church was established in Holland in 1607 or 1610. A number of them come early to America. Robert Nordin came to Virginia in 1714 from a London church. They later merged with the Free Baptists to form the Free Will Baptists. The present General Baptist church grew from the colonists sent into the Cumberland region in the early days. They believe in the general atonement, salvation to the individual, regeneration through repentance, and the possibility of falling from grace. In 1916 they counted more than thirty-three thousand.

BAPTISTS, GENERAL SIX PRINCIPLE. This branch originated in Providence, Rhode Island. They are decadent in the extreme, and in 1916 were credited with 456 members, scattered throughout Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania. They are Arminian rather than Calvinistic. The six principles are: repentance, faith, baptism, the laying on of hands, resurrection, and eternal judgment. According to their belief the laying on of hands really gives the Holy Ghost.

BAPTISTS, PRIMITIVE. This branch arose from opposition to missionary societies and Sunday schools. First announcement was made in North Carolina in 1827. It is not organized with the usual convention, etc. "Hard-shell" and "Anti-missions" are other names for the sect. It is strongly Calvinistic. Some believe in predestination. Immersion is considered the only form of baptism and is a prerequisite for participation in the Lord's Supper. Ministers have to be called of God and ordained. It opposes instrumental music in the church. Its membership in 1916 was 8,000, a distinct falling off.

BAPTISTS, SEVENTH DAY. In 1664 Stephen Mumford settled in Newport, Rhode Island. He attracted a fol-

lowing, and the organization was completed in 1671. It is Calvinistic and does not hold to strict communion. Celebration of the seventh day is the chief distinguishing characteristic. Its membership in 1916 was 8,000.

BAPTISTS, TWO-SEED-IN-THE-SPIRIT PREDESTINARIAN. Early in the Nineteenth Century this form came into being through protests of rigid Calvinists. They were strongest in Tennessee and Kentucky, although scattered throughout the Southwest. Daniel Parker was the great leader. He was ordained in 1848. The churches were scattered without organization. They closely resembled the Primitives. Their churches are extremely independent. Its name is derived from the theory of two seeds, good and evil which are both present in the soul of man. Predestination is one of the church's beliefs. Membership in 1916 was 679.

BUCHMANISM. Name applied to the followers of F. D. Buchman, Lutheran minister and Y. M. C. A. worker, who went about among universities both in America and Europe conducting confessionals, believing that sins can be "washed out" only after having admitted them in verisimilar detail. These confessionals were carried on at various house parties. The chief appeal has been to undergraduates and rich youg rulers. Buchman and his practices were denounced by President Hibben of Princeton in 1924.

CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH. It grew out of the prevalent belief around 1825 of the coming of Christ in 1830. Some received manifestations of the Holy Ghost. By 1832 certain men were considered apostles, and three years later the number had grown to twelve. The first church was organized in 1851 in Potsdam, New York, and the second in 1857. They subscribe to the Apostle's Creed, the Nicene creed, and the Athanasian. The Holy Scripture is inspired and the authority over all. Marriage is inspired and indissoluble. They believe in the laying on of hands, the gift of tongues, prophecy, tithing, and the speedy return of Christ. In 1916 there were 2,907 members reported.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE. Came from the wellspring of *Science and Health,* by Mary Baker Eddy, published in 1875. The organization came into being with the institution in 1879 of the First Church of Christ, Scientist, and has spread remarkably. It has become a refuge for worried and defeated souls of every rank. Mrs. Eddy indubitably owed many of her basic ideas to P. P. Quimby, although she denied this hotly. She preached the sole existence of the Divine Mind with the resulting nonexistence of all matter including evil and disease. Her spirit was the driving force of the order until her death, when it had received such impetus that it is now rolling along under its own power. The Boston church is styled the "Mother Church" and is the centre of authority. Policies of control and policy have caused bitter dissension with the splitting off of sundry groups. In 1896 there were 400 churches and societies. From 1890 to 1906 the membership increased 900 per cent. The church has licensed teachers, multitudinous reading rooms for the public, and publishes numerous papers.

CHRISTIAN UNION. Various bodies organized in 1864, though the Evangelical Christian Union, composed of seven congregations, had been gathered together in 1857 by Rev. E. P. Farmer. Dissension occurred at the outbreak of the Civil War and resulted in the formation of the Christian Union, in 1864. The

Union gathered to its standards all those who were opposed to the War and to political preaching. In 1916 there were 13,000 communicants.

CHURCH OF GOD AND SAINTS OF CHRIST. William S. Crowdy, a Negro cook on the Santa Fe Railroad, in 1896 had a vision of God commanding him to lead people to religion and making him a prophet. He soon organized a church with headquarters in Kansas City. He was made bishop, and later two white men were elected to the episcopacy. He claimed the Negroes to be descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel. The church teaches the Ten Commandments, a literal Bible, the Jewish Sunday, feast days with Hebrew nomenclature, repentance, immersion, use of unleavened bread and water as Lord's Supper, foot-washing, the holy kiss. The last has been dropped. Temperance is upheld and no marriage is permitted outside the elect without permission. In 1916 the membership was 3,300.

DUKHOBORS. Of a venerable and much persecuted Russian origin, this group came to Saskatchewan, Canada, in 1899, after a stop-over on the island of Cyprus. They came under the patronage of Count Leo Tolstoy and under the guidance of their leader, Peter Verigin. They were settled on good land by the Canadian government and have been treated throughout with remarkable kindness for a constituted government, in spite of the fact that they eschew the registration of marriages and births and the attendance of their school by their children. The church is communistic and pious, with a childlike faith. In 1902 sixteen hundred started on a pilgrimage to meet the Messiah in the northland. After suffering untold privations they were persuaded with difficulty to return. They have prospered in numbers and wealth with introduction of some modern farming methods. Radical branches do not believe in the domestication of animals, and pull their own ploughs and wagons.

DUNKARDS (GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHREN). This sect is commonly called Dunkers or Tunkers. It originated in 1708 and was founded by Alexander Mack. Its members immediately found refuge in Holland and then came to the United States, settling near Philadelphia. They were early divided in two branches, with some animosity between the rival leaders. They have missions in Europe, India and Asia Minor. They believe in immersion, give their ministers no stipend, and resemble the Quakers in dress, avoidance of oaths, and pacifism. There are the Conservatives, the Progressives, and the Old Order, differing principally on degree of conformity to social customs, habits of dress, and worship. The Conservatives number 100,000, the Progressives 17,435, and the Old Order 4,000.

ETHICAL CULTURE, SOCIETY FOR. Essentially a religious organization in that it buries the dead, performs the marriage service, and gives instruction, this society makes no exactions for membership, its constituents varying widely on such usually moot and important questions as the nature of God and the probability of immortality. The basis of union is a sense of the common need for betterment. It was founded in 1878 by Professor Felix Adler in the form of a school, and has adhered tenaciously to a policy of education and uplift. Its organizations are scattered in the larger cities of the United States and Europe. It has always enjoyed the patronage of prominent leaders and educators. New York is the place of its origin and is still its chief headquarters. Its growth has been steady and sound.

FOURSQUARE GOSPEL LIGHTHOUSE, THE. Evangelistic cult founded by and around Aimee Semple McPherson in Los Angeles. Angelus Temple boasts the largest fireproof auditorium in the world. The membership of 15,000 wear uniform white robes to services. "Sister" McPherson practices healing of the lame. Prayers ascend from the Watch Tower night and day by volunteers working in shifts. Motor-car "lifeboats" rush to despondent persons to carry spiritual relief. Foursquare Gospel Lighthouses are now in many states and countries.

HARMONY SOCIETY (RAPPITES OR ECONOMISTS). The Harmony Society was founded by George Rapp in 1787 in Wittenberg. In 1804 600 landed in America and took up land near Pittsburgh. In the following year it became "The Harmony Society." Possessions were held in a common fund. There was uniform dress. It was a success from the beginning. Belief in the second coming of Christ and celibacy prevailed. In 1814 they removed to Indiana and ten years later sold the property to Robert Owen, who named it "New Harmony." Returning to Pittsburgh, the community was called "Economy." Adhering faithfully to celibacy, the group had disappeared by 1903.

HOUSE OF DAVID. Directly connected with the cult of the Seven Angelic Messengers which began with Joanna Southcott as the First Messenger in 1792. Benjamin Purnell, a broom maker, in 1902 announced himself to be the Seventh Messenger and established a colony for the consummation of the Lord's work at Benton Harbor, Michigan. He was to assemble the 144,000 chosen males and an equal number of females for the millenium. Property later valued at $375,000, with membership of about six hundred. Believed that members of the colony who kept faith would never die. Opposed, avowedly, to all sexual intercourse, yet Benjamin himself was charged and convicted of statutory rape upon many girls. He died soon after the trial in 1927. His followers expected his resurrection and secured a special permit from the city to postpone the burial.

KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN. Founded by William Joseph Simmons in 1915 officially on the top of Stone Mountain near Atlanta. It has a tenuous connection with the Ku Klux Klan of post Civil War days. Gained members slowly until taken in hand and promoted by Edward Young Clarke, who made a great success. The order has voiced its motives in high-sounding words as the preservation of white supremacy, national patriotism, and the Protestant religion. It is clothed in robes and much tomfoolery. At various times it has exerted enormous political influence, especially in certain state elections. It has met with much opposition. Hiram W. Evans succeeded Simmons as the head of the order rather forcibly in 1921.

LIBERAL CATHOLIC CHURCH. A body entirely independent of the Church of Rome but tracing its lineage through the Old Catholic Church of Holland and thus preserving its apostolic succession intact. It was organized in 1918 and by 1919 had enough root in America to justify the ordination of Irving Steiger Cooper as Regionary Bishop of the United States. It is now active in seven countries. Its priests are free to chose between celibacy and marriage and it claims to have no dogmas. Its presiding bishop is the noted theosophist, Charles W. Leadbeater, who has given the present twist to its theology. It is chiefly an attempt to interpret the liturgy

of the Roman Church in terms of theosophy. Bishop Leadbeater argues that a bubble, visible to the trained spiritual eye, forms over the church during the mass, and that its form, colour, and size depend upon the attitude of the congregation and the skill of the attending angel.

LLANO COÖPERATIVE COLONY, THE. Job Harriman, Los Angeles lawyer and Marxian, founded the order in 1914 in California on the Llano del Rio, with each member giving $1,000. Membership grew to 700. Poor land and dissension brought failure. A large part moved to Louisiana where, in 1926, they had paid off the large debt incurred there and in California. They had control of 20,000 acres of land. Harrison had previously gone back to the California group, which had practically disbanded. An influx of colonists from Texas proved unhappily detrimental. Communistic from the beginning, the colony became a success when George T. Pickett, a capable executive, gained control, although his position modified the communism practised. The present settlement is called New Llano and is located near Leesville, Louisiana.

MENNONITES. Had beginning with Priest Menno Simons, a German, who broke with the Church of Rome about 1530. He made articulate the doctrines of many diverse groups of anabaptists, and they came gradually to be known by his name. First settlement of any size in America was made in Pennsylvania in 1683. Main and progressive branch today has 15 conferences, 45,000 adherents, a college in Goshen, Indiana, 27 missionaries in India. The conservative and old-fashioned branches are opposed to war, suspenders, buttons, top buggies, church buildings, Sunday Schools, and four-part music.

There are approximately 120 different smaller sects of the Mennonites alone in America. The chief of these are as follows:

Amish Mennonites (Old Order), membership 7,746; Reformed Mennonites, membership 2,794; General Conference Mennonites, membership 20,000; Stauffer People; Church of God in Christ, Mennonite, membership 2,100; Defenceless Mennonites, membership 1,040; Wisler Mennonites, membership 1,940; Mennonite Brethren in Christ, membership 7,587; Central Illinois Conference of Menonites, membership 2,874; Amish Mennonites (Conservative), membership 2,794; Russian Mennonites.

METHODISTS, FREE. In 1850 in general conference of Methodist Episcopal Church Rev. Benjamin T. Roberts thought the church had fallen away from early standards. He published an article in 1857 showing examples of defection and suffered a reprimand. The article was later republished by another, and he was unfrocked despite his protestation of innocence. With him a large number were expelled. These, coupled with withdrawals, organized at Pekin, New York, in 1860. Roberts was the first general superintendent. There was a membership of 35,291 in 1916.

METHODIST, PRIMITIVE. This was formed in a circuitous way by the introduction of the American camp meeting into England. The later expulsion of believers brought the group to America. The first missionaries came in 1829. It closely resembles the Methodist Episcopal Church in doctrine and faith. Its reported strength in 1916 was 9,353.

MILLERITES. A designation commonly given to Adventist bodies that took their cue from William Miller, a man of limited education who was converted and joined the Baptist

Church. By a clever interpretation of prophecies he taught that the millennium would follow, not precede, the end of the world. The year 1843 was set as the end of the world; that failing, the fall of 1844 was named. After that Miller discouraged the setting of any definite time. A conference at Albany, New York, in 1845, resulted in seven divisions of the Second Adventists. Miller died at Low Hampton, New York, in 1849, but his followers are still aggressive. They spend over four hundred thousand dollars annually in world missions.

MORAVIAN BODIES, THE. Moravian Church (Unitas Fratrum), membership 26,373; Evangelical Union of Bohemian and Moravian Brethren in North America, membership 1714; Independent Bohemian and Moravian Brethren Churches, membership 320. These bodies, all closely allied, have stood for religious freedom since the Fifteenth Century. They enjoyed cordial relations with Luther and Calvin. Their interest early turned to education with a translation of the Bible as a result. Persecution caused their removal to Saxony with establishment of the present church in 1735. They are evangelical in nature. This attribute caused them soon to push to North America. They were first in Pennsylvania and Georgia. Bethlehem was founded in 1741, and a coöperative union ran until 1762. Their organization was modernized in the period from 1844 to 1856. Essentially Protestant, they have no decided creed. The church organization is a modified episcopacy. They are missionary, evangelistic, and strongly educational.

MORMONISM. The Church of the Latter-Day Saints. Originated by Joseph Smith, Jr. who discovered and translated Book of Mormon from miraculously given gold plates in 1829. Started his sect in 1830 at Palmyra, N. Y., and a year later moved to Kirtland, Ohio. Next went to Illinois and founded Nauvoo. In 1844, after the destruction of an opposing printing press, Smith and his brother were killed by a mob. Brigham Young, elected in 1847 to the headship, led them in the long trek to Utah, where Salt Lake City was begun. The revelation of "celestial marriage" and polygamy came in 1852, and the latter practice was continued until 1890, when the church officially frowned upon it. Polygamy led the Mormons into open conflict with the federal government. The church is prosperous and fairly innocuous at present. The Reorganized Church of the Latter-Day Saints. Broke off from the main body in 1860 because of disagreement with Brigham Young. In 1860 Joseph Smith, son of the founder, became president. The church has headquarters in Lamoni, Iowa. It opposed polygamy from the outset and its members are popularly known as The Josephites.

NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH. This sect had the same origin as the Catholic Apostolic Church, coming with the excommunication of Bishop Schwarz. Prenss became leader, and the movement spread. They believe in the Apostle's Creed, the inspired Bible, the sacrament, baptism, and the Lord's Supper. Also they subscribe to the laying on of hands and the speedy personal premillennial coming of Christ. In 1916 the roll carried 2,828 names.

NEW ICARIANS, THE. Organized originally upon the theories of Etienne Cabet, a French socialist, the persecuted adherents emigrated to Texas in 1848, but because of a poor location were glad to take the place left vacant by the Mormons in Nauvoo, Illinois. Successful until 1856, dissension caused the secession of a

part who removed to St. Louis. The original body split again in 1879 into the Separatists and the New Icarians. The former group was communistic and faded eight years later while the Icarians went into a receivership and dissolution in 1901.

NEW THOUGHT. This movement, widespread and diversified, had its origin in the 'eighties in Boston. Warren Felt Evans, with his writings and interpretations of the doctrines of P. P. Quimby, gave the impetus for the movements which have become considered as the New Thought cults. The first church was the Church of Higher Life, founded in Boston in 1894. It has since spread throughout the world, as churches, as movements, and most commonly as incorporated syndicates for the sale of its supposed benefits. In its beginning its selling point was drugless health, as in the case of Christian Science, but latterly its leading commodity has been personality and push.

PERFECTIONISTS (ONEIDA COMMUNITY.) The Perfectionists were the product of the revival of the 1830's. Led by John Humphrey Noyes they operated on the belief that they needed a reconstructed society to be able to attain salvation. In 1838 the nucleus was started in Putney, Vermont. They were driven from Putney by the force of popular opinion and settled in Oneida, Madison County, New York. Oneida, together with Wallingford, became the headquarters of the sect. They believed that selfishness was the chief sin, so they embraced communism. Their venture was an economic success. Their doctrine of free love, in which every man was, potentially at least, every woman's husband, and vice versa, caused their dissolution in 1880 before an overpowering public disapproval. The venture became a company with a guarantee of every member's well-being. Perfection was considered a result of divine grace from Christ attained from individual effort with freedom from outward law.

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH. It was organized in August, 1898, at Anderson, South Carolina, to fill the need of closer union of churches which came up after the revival through the south and west. It tends toward joyous expression in worship and offers great allegiance to the President of the United States. It resembles Methodism in doctrine and is premillenially inclined. Doctors are used in spite of belief that provision is made for the body's healing. Membership is limited to the consciously regenerated. They believe in baptism and the Lord's Supper. In 1916 there was a membership of 5,353 in twelve states.

PLYMOUTH BRETHREN. This Christian sect has extended itself since 1830 throughout the British Empire, Europe, and the United States. It originated in John Nelson Darby, which caused the Continental name of "Darbyites." The congregation at Plymouth was founded in 1830. Its tenets are founded on the most literal interpretations of the Scripture, each word of which is divinely inspired. Premillenarian views obtain. The Lord's Supper is celebrated every Sunday. They reject all ecclesiastical authority. Practically any brother may pray or preach, but those "not gifted with utterance" are quietly discouraged from officiating. A schism occurred over the human nature of Christ, and Darby and his followers withdrew. They later subdivided more than once over question of doctrine. There are four branches with more than ten thousand, eight hundred communicants.

ROSICRUCIANS. As at present rampant in the democracy, the ancient order of Rosicrucians comprises three

main divisions: The Societas Rosicruciana, the Rosy Cross of America, and the Rosicrucian Fellowship. All branches are based upon the assumed existence of one Rosen Kreuz in the Fifteenth Century who had visited the Orient and imbibed sacred mysteries there. His society is closely connected with freemasonry but the present branches have little or no connection with the original society—though each of course claims to be the authentic guardian of the arcana. The Societas Rosicruciana maintains the most dignified front and numbers cultured people among its members. The order of the Rosy Cross has a following in innumerable small towns throughout the country. The Fellowship at Oceanside, California sprang into prominence with the conversion to its teachings of former Governor Johnson of Oklahoma and the subsequent political upheaval in that stormy state.

RUSSELLISM (INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION). Sprang and pulsed from the lifeblood of "Pastor" Charles Taze Russell, who in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century worked out a creed which included the nonexistence of hell. He early employed the sure-fire device of prophesying the millennium and the imminent coming of Christ when the existing order would be overthrown and the forces of the devil, including all other churches and creeds, destroyed. The elect, that is, the Russellites, were to take control. He travelled widely, preached with equal latitude, and gained many followers. He came to New York in 1909, and with the rapid growth of his organization moved to gigantic quarters in Brooklyn. His previous divorce and the scandal of "miracle wheat" were two of the off-colour phases of his career. He died in 1916. The stubborn persistence of the world in existing, and the necessary postponements of the millennium, have not daunted his followers in the least. J. F. Rutherford is the present head.

SCHWENKFELDERS. Kaspar von Schwenkfelder was an enthusiastic worker in the reformation. He died in 1561. Two hundred of his followers came to Philadelphia in September, 1734. They moved to Lehigh County and the surrounding country and established themselves. The majority have remained there. A closer union was effected in 1782. They opposed war, secret societies, and the taking of oaths. They have dropped the ban on secret societies and leave the attitude toward war to the individual conscience. They maintain the Perkiomen School. The Bible is the only basis, of their belief, but is dead without the indwelling word. Change is accomplished through faith with subsequent spiritual growth. Baptism is unimportant. In 1916 the membership was 1,127.

SHAKERISM (United Body of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing). Brought to this country in 1774 from a sect of Shaking Quakers in England by Ann Lee, believed to be the Mother of God or the Christ Spirit in its consummating manifestation. The Shaking Quakers by whom Mother Ann was received as the new messiah, sprang from the French Prophets, a band of Protestants who were mercilessly persecuted first in France and later in England. They were seized by vigorous shakings, which often induced the gift of prophecy. The Shakers met with similar persecutions in pioneer America. Their strength was greatly increased as a result of a Methodist revival near Mount Lebanon, New York, and again as a result of the famous Kentucky revival in 1800. Missionaries were sent to the converts of

this latter outpouring. The strength was greatest during the 1840's. Practically extinct today. Colony at Union City, Ohio, sold in 1912. Few remain at Mount Lebanon and at Harvard, Massachusetts. Groups lived by communistic arrangement and scorned machine-made commodities. Considered sex the worst sin and forbade intercourse even between man and wife.

SOCIETY OF SEPARATISTS AT ZOAR. In 1817 wealthy dissenters driven from Wittenberg came to America and settled in Ohio. The presence of other old and poor believers forced them into communism. In 1818 there were 225 members. Celibacy was advocated by Joseph Baumeler and was permitted, although it never became popular. In 1874 there were 300 members with a title to 7,000 acres of land and proportionate wealth. They were pacifists, opposers of state schools; they refused to bow in worship, had no ceremonies, no ordained ministers, worshipped in song, sanctioned sexual intercourse solely for propagation, and deemed celibacy better than marriage. The community was finally dissolved in 1898.

SPIRITUALISM. Had its origin in the alleged spirit rapping of the Fox sisters at Hydesville, New York, in 1848, and by the enterprising work of an older sister the cult soon spread as far as St. Louis and had produced phenomena throughout New England. Some eighteen years later it was introduced into England by D. D. Home. Claimed millions of adherents, but in 1910 the census reported 50,000. There is a National Assembly, twenty-two state auxiliaries, and some five hundred local societies. Although the Fox sisters confessed the rappings were made with their big toes and that all was a grand fraud, the followers still believe in communication with the dead by feats of mediums.

SWEDENBORGIANISM. Comprises two main branches in America—the General Church of the New Jerusalem, dating from 1817 and the General Church of the New Jerusalem, organized in 1897. The General Church has headquarters in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, where it maintains a first rate college known as the Academy. First movement toward organization made in London in 1782 when Robert Hindmarsh, a printer, formed a class to study the writings of Swedenborg. Whole scheme of both churches founded upon belief that Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish scientist, received a divine illumination in 1744. At this time he claimed to have been admitted to full intercourse with the world of spirits and to have received a special gift for interpreting and fulfilling Holy Writ. He wrote twenty-eight large volumes setting forth his doctrine. These Writings are the final court of appeal among his followers. Complete editions of his works in English have been issued by the American Swedenborg Printing and Publishing Society of New York.

THEOSOPHY. The first Theosophical Society was founded in New York City in 1875 by Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, aided by Col. H. S. Olcott and W. Q. Judge. As at present organized it numbers more than fourteen hundred branches all over the world. General headquarters are at Adyar, India. Madame Blavatsky claimed (and her claims are accepted by Theosophists) to have penetrated the trans-Himalayan fastness of Tibet and there to have communed with certain Mahatmas. These were the Elder Brothers of the race, men of infinitely superior wisdom, and they commissioned her to found an occult brotherhood for the perpetuation of their teachings. Mrs. Annie Besant, a noted freethinker, joined the movement in 1891

and has since become its most distinguished representative. In 1908 Mrs. Besant discovered Jiddu Krishnamurti, in India, and became convinced that he was to incarnate the spirit of the World Teacher in his next appearing. The belief runs that all religions have their origins in a single source, the Great White Brotherhood of adepts. Besides the belief in the Mahatmas, the most distinctive tenet of Theosophy is belief in reincarnation. A separate organization resulted when W. Q. Judge withdrew from the convention in Boston in 1895. Mrs. Katherine Tingley later succeeded the Judge as president of this branch, the Universal Brotherhood and Theosophical Society.

UNITY SCHOOL OF CHRISTIANITY. Founded in 1889 at Kansas City, Missouri, upon the inspiration of Myrtle Fillmore and with the assistance of her husband, Charles Fillmore. Mrs. Fillmore's illumination came at the end of a long period of family hard luck; she visualized both prosperity and health, and both came. The two started devoting all their time to the printing of tracts bearing the good news, and within a few years an enormous organization had grown up. Doctrine closely allied with that of Christian Science and the New Thought, and it is chiefly the business principles and the enterprising work of the founders that have given the Unity School distinction. They teach that it is possible to attain immortality in the body, corresponding in that detail to the House of David. Maintain absent healing department and report countless cures of every manner of disease by prayer and pamphlets. Literature said to reach more than two million people annually. Have recently purchased a farm near Kansas City, where they propose to establish an ideal community.

UNIVERSALISM. This began with the arrival in Good Luck, New Hampshire, in 1770 of John Murray, where he was recognized by Rev. Thomas Potter as the preacher sent by the Lord in answer to this prayer and expectation. Murray became the pillar apostle of American Universalism. The belief was organized in 1803. In 1900 the General Convention at Boston said that their belief was: 1. Universal Fatherhood of God; 2. The Spiritual authority and leadership of His Son; 3. Trustworthiness of the Bible as a revelation of God; 4. Certainty of just retribution for sin; 5. Final harmony of all souls with God. This last belief is the chief factor in their creed. They hold that this life is "the suburb of the life elysian," that death is a necessary prelude to immortal life, that all must pay for sins, but that all will eventually be reconciled with God. In 1920 650 societies had 58,566 communicants. Boston and Chicago are centres for headquarters.

YOGODA SAT-SANGA SOCIETY. Established in America in 1920 by the Swami Yogananda, following his visit to Boston as a delegate from India to the International Congress of Religions. He had previously established schools for teaching Yogoda—a system of attaining Cosmic Consciousness and superabundant vitality—in Ranchi, India. He found American soil fertile for his doctrine and headquarters were inevitably moved to Los Angeles, where he conducts correspondence courses and long-distance healing services. There are 10,000 students of Yogoda with centres in ten American cities. The Swami numbers a host of famous persons among his students, including Amelita Galli-Curci, Countess Ilya Tolstoy, the late Luther Burbank, and others.

II

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